



THE INDEPENDENT

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THURSDAY 28 AUGUST 1997

WEATHER: Warm and muggy with showers

(R 45p) 40p

IN THE TABLOID: FILM
**THE FULL MONTY —
ENGLISH MANHOOD
STRIPPED BARE**



IN THE TABLOID
**WRITTEN IN BLOOD —
THE WIVES' REVENGE**



EDUCATION+
**W GOOD
A E OUR
IVERSITIES**

George turns his back on those two-fingered followers



Egomania: Oasis brothers Noel and Liam Gallagher following in the footsteps of George Harrison in Abbey Road

Photomontage: Jonathan Anstee

John Lichfield

George Harrison thinks Oasis, who have acknowledged the Beatles as a source of inspiration for much of their music, are "musical rubbish".

giving an interview to *Le Figaro* to promote a new album, *Chants of India*, by his friend, the virtuoso of the sitar, Ravi Shankar. Harrison produced the album.

Asked whether he enjoyed groups such as U2, Texas and Oasis, he replied: "Rubbish! They aren't very interesting. It's OK if you're 14 years old. I prefer to listen to Dylan."

based on ego. Look at a group like U2. Bono and his band are so egocentric... The more you jump around, the bigger your hat is, the more people listen to your music...

The Beatles, he said, "had a value which will last forever. Today there are groups who sell lots of records and then disappear immediately. Will we remember U2 in 30 years? Or

the Spice Girls? I doubt it. The good thing about them is that you can look at them with the sound turned down."

Harrison, who has not made a record of his own for five years, told *Le Figaro* that he was "still writing songs. I might go into a studio next winter. I would like to record again with the Travelling Wilburys. But Bob Dylan is not well. I'm going to see him soon."



The original Abbey Road

The biggest boom since the Eighties

Diane Coyle, Chris Godsmark and Ian Burrell

A portrait of a nationwide spending spree emerged yesterday from figures indicating record car sales in the R-registration bonanza, a widespread boom in house prices rippling out from London to the regions, and a surge in imports of cars and other consumer goods.

The reports suggested that share windfalls, resulting from building societies converting to banks, are fuelling the biggest consumer boom since the late 1980s, despite the recent interest rate rises. Car sales, house price inflation and growth in retail sales have all returned to their highest levels for nearly a decade.

Sales of new cars in this year's R-registration bonanza are likely to break the previous record for the key month of August, according to industry figures. The daily sales statistics, collected by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, showed a 16.5 per cent jump in total sales of R-registration cars in the first 30 days of August, to 382,000. The figures are better than even the most optimistic forecasts by car companies and dealers, and suggest sales for the whole of the month will reach 520,000, easily beating the previous August peak of 500,112 during the last boom in 1989.

But the August registration figures are also likely to show another rise in the proportion of imported cars. In the first seven months of 1997, imports accounted for two thirds of UK registrations, up from 60 per

House price rises

Average house prices for England and Wales comparing April-June 1997 with the same period in 1996:

Type	Average Price 1996	Average Price 1997	% rise
Detached	£106,006	£114,806	8.3
Semi	£81,359	£86,563	6.4
Flats	£53,468	£70,747	11.4

Source: Land Registry

cent the year before. The turnaround is reflected in the alarming slide in Ford's market share to just 16 per cent, down from almost 22 per cent in 1995. Private buyers are increasingly opting for imported makes such as Renault, Fiat and Volkswagen.

This August was only the second time that registrations have topped the half-a-million mark in the month. Private buyers, who were notoriously cautious last year about committing themselves to "big ticket" purchases like cars, have flocked to spend their windfall bonuses from building society conversions and takeovers.

Trevor Finn, chief executive of Penetration, the largest UK dealer chain, said: "The windfalls are one factor, but people's minds are generally more settled about the economic situation and job security has stabilised." The picture of a national spending spree was fleshed out by the news that the North East is at the forefront of a widespread rise in provincial house prices that is beginning to show similarities to the housing boom of nine years ago.

Prices in the Hartlepool constituency of Peter Mandelson, the minister without portfolio, are now rising faster than those

in London, according to official Land Registry figures. A Nationwide survey of house prices out tomorrow will support the finding that other areas of the country are starting to mirror the London trend.

The Land Registry survey showed that in England and Wales as a whole, prices rose by 8.9 per cent from the period of April to June 1996 to the corresponding period this year.

By comparison, the average increase in prices in Greater London was 12.8 per cent, with the average price up from £100,946 to £113,858.

Hartlepool prices went up by 17.9 per cent in the year, more than any other area except Buckinghamshire, where prices increased by 25.3 per cent, and Staffordshire, where there was a 18.9 per cent increase. Alan Lakey, senior manager of Hartlepool estate agents, Mannes & Harrison, said: "The more times people talk about Hartlepool the better for the town. It's quite an exciting place."

The Blair effect helped lift Islington prices from an average £121,407 to £149,905 (up 23.4 per cent). But the once-impoised London borough of Tower Hamlets was revealed as the newly-fashionable quarter of the capital, with prices rising from an average £81,725 to £104,842 (up 28.2 per cent).

Other figures yesterday showed that Britain's deficit in trade with the rest of the world climbed to nearly £1bn in June — the month the Halifax floated on the Stock Exchange — due mainly to a rapid increase in imports of consumer goods.

Trade figures, page 16

Police to investigate MI5 leak

Jason Bennetto
Crime Correspondent

The head of MI5 has asked Scotland Yard to investigate whether one of its former agents has breached the Official Secrets Act by revealing details of top-level surveillance operations.

The move follows a meeting yesterday between Stephen Lander, the Security Service's director general and Jack Straw, the Home Secretary.

David Shayler, who spent five years working for MI5, has caused a political furore after claiming that Security Service kept personal files on dozens of

prominent individuals including Mr Straw, Peter Mandelson, the minister without portfolio, Sir Edward Heath, the former Tory prime minister and Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP for Linlithgow.

Mr Straw and Mr Lander discussed the issues of accountability and surveillance at yesterday's meeting, which was described as "friendly and frank".

Detectors from the Metropolitan Police's Special Branch are to investigate Mr Shayler, who is in hiding in Europe, and will attempt to locate and interview him. Mr Shayler could face up to two years' imprisonment if found guilty of breaking

the Official Secrets Act. The decision by MI5 to call on the police in an attempt to stop Mr Shayler making any more damaging disclosures was immediately challenged by Liberty, the civil rights group, which has pledged to help the former agent fight any attempt to prosecute him.

Mr Shayler's revelations have raised questions about MI5's accountability, and according to the former agent, show the organisation's obsession with gathering information on harmless individuals. Under the Official Secrets Act 1989 it is an offence for any member of MI5 "to dis-

close without lawful authority any official information about security or intelligence".

Any MI5 tapping of MPs' telephones would have directly breached assurances given to the Commons by all prime ministers over the last 31 years, writes Anthony Bevis. While Mr Shayler has suggested that Sir Edward and Mr Dalyell had files opened on them, it is not clear whether this included telephone interception.

Although a Committee of Privy Counsellors reported to Harold Macmillan, then Tory Prime Minister, in 1957, that MPs were in exactly the same po-

sition as any private citizen in regard to the interception of communications, Harold Wilson told the Commons in 1966 that "the balance should be tipped the other way" and he had instructed that there was to be no tapping of MPs' telephones. In 1980 Margaret Thatcher confirmed: "as has each of my predecessors since that time, that the policy remains as stated by [Sir Harold]."

As warrants for telephone intercepts have to be signed by the Home Secretary, tapping of MPs' phones cannot have taken place — unless it has been done, illegally, without warrant.

Volcano drums up a storm in Edinburgh

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

Scientists have discovered an intriguing connection between Edinburgh and the tropics which may explain Robin Cook's abrupt interest in the rumbling Soufriere Hills volcano, now threatening to bury Montserrat.

According to new research, whenever a tropical volcano blows its top, the city of Edinburgh suffers two cold, stormy winters — as do Mr Cook's constituents in Livingston, just 13 miles west of the city, where this October the Commonwealth

Heads of Government Conference will take place.

Even though the two locations are 4,000 miles apart, investigations by Alistair Dawson, from Coventry University, and Kieran Hickey, from St Patrick's College, Ireland, have found that Edinburgh's meteorological records between 1770 and 1988 — the longest in Europe — show a close match between bad weather and tropical volcanic activity.

The city is already famous for its strong winds, but the scientists found that its strongest storms occurred in the winters following three of the biggest volcanic eruptions on record.

For two winters after the April 1815 eruptions of Tambora in Indonesia, and that of Krakatoa in August 1883, Edinburgh endured gales of Force 7 or stronger for 70 days of the year — twice the usual frequency. The year after El Chichon erupted in Mexico, in March and April 1982, there were more than 50 days of strong gales recorded in the city.

The connection is probably due to the enormous amounts of dust that volcanic eruptions can throw into the stratosphere. There, the dust circulates over the Earth's surface and temporarily cools the surface below.

The Mt Pinatubo eruption in the Philippines in June 1991 lowered temperatures globally — not just on Scotland's east coast.

Why Edinburgh and its environs should be particularly chosen to suffer is unclear. Professor Dawson said the precise mechanisms "need to be investigated".

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) said it did not know whether Mr Cook was already aware of the research. "Our immediate concern is the people in Montserrat," said a spokesman. "And I think Mr Cook would be sympathetic to bad weather anywhere."



Why Does Your Memory Fail You?

A WORLD-FAMOUS memory expert, who has trained industrialists, trades unionists, businessmen, professional men, salesmen, housewives and students to improve their memories, once said:

"Many people are embarrassed by a poor memory, and find difficulty in concentrating, whilst others realise that they lose business, academic and social opportunities not only because they cannot remember accurately everything they see, hear or read, but also because they cannot think or express their thoughts clearly, logically and concisely. Some seek advice, but many do not, mainly because they believe their memories cannot be improved."

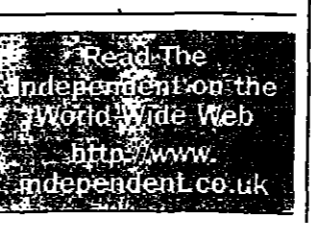
Simple Technique
And yet, he went on to explain, he has devised a simple technique which can improve even the poorest memory. What's more, it can even work like magic to give you added poise, self-confidence and greater personal effectiveness. Everyone owes it to himself to find out more about this method.

Rapid Results
According to this remarkable man, anyone — regardless of his present skill — could, in just 20 minutes a day, improve his memory and concentration to a remarkable degree. For example, you need never for-

get another appointment — ever! You could learn names, faces, facts, figures and foreign languages faster than you ever thought possible. You may be able to imprint whole books on your memory after a single reading. You could be more successful in your studies and examinations. At parties and dinners you may never again be at a loss for appropriate words or entertaining stories. In fact, you could even be more poised and self-confident in everything you say and do.

Free
To acquaint all readers of *The Independent* with the easy-to-follow rules for developing skill in remembering, we, the publishers, have printed full details of this interesting self-training method in a fascinating book, "Adventures in Memory", sent free on request. No obligation. No salesman will call. Just fill in and return the coupon on Page (you don't even need to stamp your envelope), or write to: Memory and Concentration Studies (Dept. IDM 37), FREEPOST 198, Manchester M60 3DL.

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news

significant shorts

Father thought children were just 'playing dead'

The father of a teenage girl who hanged herself with her 10-year-old friend after a game went tragically wrong said yesterday that when he first saw them, he thought they were playing a game in which they pretended to be dead.

Stephen Rogers described the moment he went into his 13-year-old daughter's bedroom and found her slumped on the bed with her playmate Daniel Gibbs, 10, standing against the bunk bed. They had a scarf tied around their necks.

Mr Rogers, of Croydon Green, Herts, said: "They were playing, that is the bottom line. They had been out in the garden playing cricket. They came in for some dinner, had a couple of sandwiches and then went up to the bedroom. We assumed they were playing on the computer and making a camp out of the dining room furniture in the bedroom where they were playing."

He added: "We're devastated. We can't believe it. It is unreal, absolutely unreal." He denied reports that the children had died re-enacting a hanging scene from a Kevin Costner film.

Jet catastrophe narrowly averted

A catastrophe in the skies was narrowly avoided when two airliners carrying more than 300 people came perilously close to colliding after an air-traffic controller instructed the wrong pilot to descend, a report disclosed yesterday.

Two Heathrow-bound Boeing 757s were caught in a "stack" of airliners awaiting landing instructions, when one was ordered to descend - into the path of another.

Fortunately, the pilot of the higher of the two planes spotted the danger and climbed to safety as the aircraft came within 400ft of each other. The pilot who took evasive action said there had been "a high risk of collision" and that a collision would have occurred if the weather over Biggin Hill in Kent had not been good.

In a report on the incident, on November 22 last year, the Joint Airprox Working Group - which studies air misses - said it had been a "very serious" incident.

Heavyweight prices in Ali sale

Robes and gloves worn by Muhammad Ali at the height of his boxing career went on show to British fans yesterday, ahead of a unique sale of memorabilia. More than 3,000 items linked to the former heavyweight champion are to be auctioned in Los Angeles on 19 October.

The collection, which was built up over more than a decade by an American businessman, Ronnie Fager, is expected to raise around £1m. It is on show at Christie's in London until Sunday, before going to the US.

The centrepiece is the gown he wore for the "Rumble in the Jungle" against George Foreman in Zaire in 1974, which was immortalised in the recent Oscar-winning film *When We Were Kings*. It is expected to sell for around £75,000.

Drinks binge killed gay policeman

One of the highest-ranking police officers to "come out" as gay hanged himself after a massive drinks binge, an inquest heard yesterday. David Buff, 33 - the Metropolitan Police's youngest Detective Chief Inspector - drank a potentially lethal amount of alcohol on 4 May at the three-storey house he shared with his partner, fellow policeman James Baillie, then hanged himself from a first-floor bannister.

The coroner, Dr Stephen Chan, said that to most people it would appear an obvious suicide, but Mr Buff had drunk so much he would not have been capable of making a conscious decision to take his life. He recorded an open verdict on Mr Buff, of Mast House Terrace, Millwall, south-east London.

Pathologist Dr Diane Cox told the inquest he had a blood-alcohol level of 260 milligrams. The maximum for driving is 80 milligrams.

BA clears pilots of safety breach

Two British Airways pilots who were suspended after a five-year-old girl was seen in the cockpit of a London-bound jet have been cleared of any wrongdoing, it was announced yesterday.

Captain Phil Highton and his co-pilot underwent an internal investigation after allegations that Emily Pickersgill pushed buttons on the flight deck of a Boeing 757.

"The two pilots have been cleared of allegations that they breached company safety regulations," said BA. It was satisfied passengers were not in danger on the August 16 flight from Nice.

Family voyage ends in disaster

A family who sold everything to sail around the world were dramatically rescued by a Royal Navy aircraft carrier as their yacht sank in mountainous seas. The couple, travelling with their six-year-old son, issued a mayday after they ran into difficulties during atrocious conditions in the Bay of Biscay on Tuesday night.

The signal from the family, who were travelling from Lowestoft to Gibraltar and were about 200 miles from the French coast at the time, was picked up about 60 miles away by HMS *Illustrious*.

Chief Petty Officer Bob Saunders, who took part in the rescue, said: "They had sold up everything in the UK and were off round the world. They were going down to the Mediterranean first. Now they have nothing." The names of the rescued family had not yet been released by the Navy.

people



OUT OF FASHION: Elizabeth Emanuel, the designer who created Princess Diana's wedding dress, yesterday said that her business was in dire straits due to the collapse of her major backer, the clothing importer Hamlet. Ms Emanuel, 44, said: "I am totally devastated by what has happened."

Tears as couple lose fight to adopt drug-addict baby

A foster mother was in tears outside the High Court yesterday after she and her husband lost their fight to adopt a 14-month-old girl born addicted to heroin and methadone. The judge praised the couple for the care they gave the child, who also has eczema, asthma, epilepsy and an allergy to dairy products. "I wish to pay tribute to the enormous contribution they have made to the baby's future," said Mr Justice Cazalet. "It is quite apparent that they love her, she loves them and they are well-bonded."

Removing "Baby S" from their home would cause distress, particularly to the couple's own four children, he said. But there were no grounds for overturning the decision of Cornwall County Council, which found the couple were not suitable for adoption, despite the fact that the natural mother wanted them to have her child. The council's adoption panel disagreed, partly because the father, also a drug addict, had objected to the family and threatened to disrupt the fostering arrangement.

Last month social workers went to the couple's home, in the St Austell area, to take the baby away. When they did not hand her over, police were called but refused to intervene.

The judge said that the attempt to remove the child was "wholly improper" and against the baby's interests because no proper notice had been given.

But the council had since rectified the situation by giving valid notice and it could not be said its decision to remove the baby was irrational, unreasonable or against natural justice. The judge, who directed that the parties must remain anonymous to avoid identifying the child, said the foster parents' adoption application would be dismissed unless they lodged notice of appeal against his ruling within seven days.

After the hearing, the foster mother was comforted by her husband and one of their daughters. They said that the judge's decision was wrong. The couple have been registered foster parents for seven years, have cared for 14 children and were said to be highly regarded by the council.

Typist holds key to keeping the peace

A former typist has a tough new role - coaching police officers to deal with trouble.

Judy Cousins, 35, was picked from 40 other applicants - mostly men - to become Britain's first female civilian public order trainer. She will work with Northumbria police.

Her 16 years of typing for the force may not seem the ideal preparation - but she is a former national judo champion and black belt and is keen on many other sports from hockey and volleyball to golf, tennis and squash.

Judy, who lives at Hexham and worked at the town's police station, was seconded to headquarters for six months.

"I did feel under some pressure to prove myself at first because I was a woman moving into what



had been very much a man's world until my appointment in public order training," she said. "But I was completely accepted by all the male officers from the very outset."

"I know women are not generally as strong as men, but we can bring other qualities to the job - not least that a woman tends to be less aggressive by nature."

From 'This Life' to that betrayal

Tortured souls are becoming Ramon Tikaram's specialty. After playing Fero, the sexually confused Mexican despatch rider in the cult television series *This Life*, the 31-year-old actor has been cast as Judas Iscariot in the revival of *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Tikaram takes over the part on 15 September, making his West End debut at the Lyceum Theatre in London. He will star alongside Glenn Carter as Jesus of Nazareth and Joanna Ampil as Mary Magdalene in the Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber musical.

Tikaram's latest part will be a change from his role as long-haired, leather-clad Fero, whom *This Life* fans saw enjoying a number of steamy encounters with members of both sexes.

In the recently released film *Karna Subra* he plays an erotic temple sculptor.

briefing

MOTORING Traffic jams are worse than ever, says AA report

Traffic jams have grown steadily worse this year, with drivers in the South-east and Midlands bearing the brunt of the congestion, an AA report said yesterday.

The worst month for gridlock in the first half of the year was June, when the wet weather was a major factor. Nearly half of the accidents which led to the worst of the delays in the six-month period from January to June happened in the morning rush-hour.

Car Free Day on Tuesday 17 June - when drivers were urged to leave their vehicles at home - proved a flop, with 10 per cent more congestion incidents recorded than normal.

AA Roadwatch logged more than 175,000 jams and hold-ups in the first six months of 1997. The most clogged road was the M42 at junction two in Hereford and Worcester on 10 March, when a multi-vehicle accident led to 28 hours of delays. **Randeep Ramesh**

NATURAL HISTORY

Dinosaurs may show true colours

Dinosaurs may soon reveal their true colours after the discovery of preserved pigment in the fossils of extinct fish.

Scientists believe similar pigments might be hidden in dinosaur fossils - allowing them to work out the colour of the giant beasts for the first time. Rather than the commonly assumed grey or drab green, creatures such as *Tyrannosaurus Rex* could have been brightly coloured, like present day lizards.

Andrew Parker, a biophysicist from the Australian Museum in Sydney, is reported by *New Scientist* to have discovered cells called chromatophores, which contain colour pigments, in fish fossils. If researchers knew where to look, he says, they should be able to work out the colours of other extinct animals.

"We can finally accurately describe the colour of animals from the past rather than simply speculate or extrapolate the colour by comparing it to modern animals," Parker told the magazine.

However, an expert from the Natural History Museum said it was unlikely that dinosaurs were brightly coloured. Dr Angela Milner said: "It's not impossible dinosaurs had bright colours but it's not likely. If you look at the range of large lizards and crocodiles today most of them are not brightly coloured."



SOCIETY

Dial "R" for rage

"Phone rage" may be about to replace road rage as one of the more fashionable ways of letting off steam. More than six out of 10 respondents in a survey believed that more people are losing their temper on the telephone than did five years ago.

A report by the recruitment agency Reed Employment Services found that just 5 per cent of people believed the phenomenon had declined. Nearly two-thirds of respondents felt they were more likely to express their anger on the telephone rather than face-to-face or in letters.

Nearly three-quarters said they had much higher expectations that their problems would be solved on the spot over the phone and more than half revealed they had themselves lost their temper.

An insincere voice or an inattentive response was found to be the most provocative, followed by being kept waiting.

More organisations have laid down a mandatory telephone greeting to avoid irritation, Reed found. The survey is silent however on whether greetings such as "Hello this is Acme Footwear. My name is Mandy how may I help you?" provokes even more anger.

EMPLOYMENT

Unions' white-collar future

The typical trade unionist is likely to be a middle-aged white collar worker, rather than a "cloth-capped, beer-swilling factory worker", according to TUC analysis of official figures.

In its report *Trade Unions Today*, the TUC says more than four out of ten union members are managers, professionals and "associate professionals" such as social workers and nurses. Only around one in 10 are plant and machine operatives.

The great geographical divide however lives on. More than four in 10 people in the North of England and Wales are union members, compared with only two out of 10 in the South-east (excluding London).

The report shows that just under a third of all employees - 6.9 million - are union members. Some 5.8 million work full time with just 1.1 million part-timers. Just under half are women.

John Monks, TUC general secretary, said unions needed to recruit more part-time workers, young people and women, especially in smaller and private firms.

DRINK

Five alcopops withdrawn from sale

Five alcopop drinks are being withdrawn by manufacturers after breaking the industry's code of conduct, a report by the Portman Group announces today.

The industry watchdog's report also reveals that eight other companies are revising labels, packaging and marketing literature on drinks which similarly breached the code.

Those products being taken off shelves include Barking Frog, Space Doubt, WKD Red and Vixen. Sainsbury's own-brand alcoholic lemonade, criticised for featuring a cartoon-style lemon on the label, is already being discontinued. Meanwhile Speciality Brands, the makers of the alcoholic milk drink Moo, which caused uproar when it was launched, have agreed to give it a new name to make it less appealing to under-18s.

Code Report 4, The Portman Group, 2d Wimpole Street, London W1M 7AA.

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NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING Recycled paper made up 43.6% of the raw material for UK newspapers in 1996

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Sweden	£5.00
Switzerland	£5.00
USA	£5.00
Wales	£5.00
Yugoslavia	£5.00

WEATHER	
The British Isles	
It will be a showery day across the entire country. In Northern Ireland and western Scotland there will be brief glimpses of the sun with frequent, blustery showers. Some of the showers will be locally thundery and prolonged at times. Wales, central and western parts of England will have sunny spells but showers will be fairly regular. In eastern parts of Scotland and southern and eastern England the showers will be more isolated and some parts may escape dry, with the best of the day's sunshine.	
The showers will mainly die out during Friday with all parts seeing some decent sunshine before the day is over, although rain may reach the extreme south-west later in the day. On Saturday it will be cloudy with rain in places along English Channel coasts and the odd shower in western Scotland, but elsewhere it will become dry with long sunny spells. Turning unsettled on Sunday with rain in much of England and Wales but Scotland and Northern Ireland will be mainly dry with sunny spells.	
Lighting up times	
Today	19.56 to 6.08
Tomorrow	19.53 to 6.08
Monday	20.03 to 6.16
Tuesday	20.00 to 6.11
Wednesday	20.06 to 6.11
Thursday	20.07 to 6.13
Friday	20.09 to 6.07
Saturday	20.21 to 6.15
Sunday	20.25 to 6.25

Europe and The World	
WORLD WEATHER YESTERDAY MIDDAY (GMT): cloudy, clear, fog, haze, mist, rain, snow, sun, thunder, previous day's figure at local time.	
Algeria	29 84
Athens	15 59
Bangkok	24 75
Bombay	24 75
Buenos Aires	24 75
Calcutta	24 75
Cairo	24 75
Cape Town	24 75
Cardiff	24 75
Chennai	24 75
Copenhagen	24 75
Dublin	24 75
Edinburgh	24 75
Geneva	24 75
Hong Kong	24 75
London	24 75
Los Angeles	24 75
Madrid	24 75
Manila	24 75
Moscow	24 75
Mumbai	24 75
New York	24 75
Paris	24 75
Rangoon	24 75
Seoul	24 75
Singapore	24 75
Sydney	24 75
Taipei	24 75
Tokyo	24 75
Wellington	24 75
Zurich	24 75

AA Roadwatch	
London, Richmond Park between Kingston Gate and Ham Gate closed for roadworks until Oct 31.	
London, A30 Hammerhead Bridge. Closed until January 1998.	
Surrey, M25 38-40. Lane closures both ways until further notice.	
Staffordshire, A50 Stoke On Trent. Major works until March 1998.	
Lancashire, M1 J24 and Selsley Island. Work for the new Doris Southern Bypass.	
Greater Manchester, A58 Park Rd. Closed southbound between the A6 and Cricketer Way, Diversion via A6 and Bolton Rd until Oct 24.	
Merseyside, A57 Balcarras. Single Rd closed with one-way traffic notice.	
Type R, West, A19 Newcastle area. Roadworks at Killingworth.	
West Yorkshire, M1 J27, May's Lane. Roadworks until Sept 15.	
North Yorkshire, A19 Thirsk area. Roadworks.	
City of Glasgow, M8 J25. Cycle lane. A770 Cumbernauld interchange. Roadworks. Lane 1 both ways due to roadworks until Aug 31.	
Out and about with AA Roadwatch can give you the latest local and national traffic news. Source: The AA Roadwatch Association. Calls charged at 50p per minute at all times inc VAT.	
Sun and Moon	
Sun sets	6.06
Moon rises	19.56
Moon sets	1.37
Full moon	17.22
Full moon	17.22

سكنا من الامن

Must Saturday night be a TV desert?

The reprieve of Cilla Black this week underlines the failure of the big channels to grab the young and upwardly-mobile

By Paul McCann
Media Correspondent

Speculation this week that *Surprise Surprise*, Cilla Black's family reunion show, would be cancelled by incoming ITV director of programmes David Liddiment brought the focus in broadcasting onto what to do with Saturday night TV.

Such is the sensitivity ITV has about upsetting Cilla, who is paid £3.5m over two years, that ITV immediately issued a denial of the story.

But the well-placed ITV source for the story was not the only reason for its running. Once *Surprise Surprise* took 12m viewers - it has slumped to five or six million this year.

Fifteen years ago even middling Saturday night variety quiz shows like *Ted Rogers 3-2-1* could easily bring in 15m viewers. It was the night of the week with the biggest number of available viewers and broadcasters used lowest common denominator fare with its roots in the variety theatre to target the population as a whole.

Today these shows are virtually the same. Jim Davidson may have taken over from Larry Grayson and Bruce Forsyth, but the *Generation Game* lives. In 1982 Noel Edmonds hosted the *Late Late Breakfast Show*, now he has a *House Party*.

Relative to other formats these programmes still bring in viewers and they are cheap to make. But now only *Blind Date* and Noel regularly top 10m.

"The broadcasters are in a Catch 22 situation," says Alan James, TV buying director at advertising agency Ogilvy & Mather. "They bring sizeable numbers, but this means they are terrified of trying anything new. They are trapped with these kinds of programmes and the audience for them is getting older and starting to die off."

Paul Jackson, the BBC's head of entertainment admitted earlier this year that some Saturday night formats have fallen out of fashion: "Variety is going through a cyclical period of unpopularity. It has tended not to deliver recently."

The BBC, although relying heavily on variety acts for the National Lottery Live, has been



TV times: Saturday with Cilla on the BBC in 1973, above, while ITV featured Reg Varney. Programming Nineties style with the *Airport* team below. Photograph: BBC



using dramas like *Casualty* and *Crime Traveller* to get out of the variety trap.

Two years ago *Man O Man* and *The Shane Richie Experience* were touted as the new, more risqué face of ITV Saturday nights. Both programmes

lasted only a season after poor ratings.

For ITV, delivering big ratings to its advertisers is its raison d'être, but it also needs them to be upmarket and young. According to figures from CIA MediaLab, *Surprise Surprise*'s

average 5.9m audience is two thirds downmarket: C2DE viewers and 3.5m of them are over 55 years old.

When the likes of Unilever and Procter & Gamble's soap powders and foods dominated television advertising these de-

mographics were fine. But now the growth in advertising is coming from the cars, mobile phones and leisure products that are targeted at the young and upmarket.

Some at the BBC are looking for Saturday salvation by producing more of what TV jargon calls popular factual shows.

These can be the people observation programmes - known as POBs - like *The Driving School* or *Airport* that work well for the BBC on weekdays, or the more dramatic *Emergency 999* and police reconstruction programmes that both broadcasters air.

These have the advantage of being cheaper to make than the guaranteed ratings winners like police and costume dramas, but may not be strong enough to bring in younger, upmarket viewers.

The fact is that those who watch any TV on Saturday evenings are increasingly getting older and more downmarket. "Those who can afford to have got better things to do with their Saturday nights," says Anthony Jones of CIA MediaLab. "Eating out and going to the cinema have rocketed up since the end of the recession, it might not just be that TV is running out of steam. The audience is running out on TV."

But some in the media question if it is possible to rescue the big Saturday night in front of the TV. "It is a changing social environment," says Ian Lewis head of broadcasting at Zenith Media, the country's largest airtime buyer. "There is no going back to a time when one type of entertainment was enjoyed by great swathes of the population."

Cracker the overweight, chain smoking, criminal psychologist is to return to British TV screens as a thin American who plays with cigarettes without lighting them.

In a twist worthy of the programme, Granada sold it to American television producers this year and its subsidiary, Granada Entertainment USA, has now sold the US version back to ITV to be shown here. The name *Cracker* is thought to have been dropped by the Americans because it is a racist term for whites.



Not a lorry laughs: Cilla Black in *Blind Date* but her other *Surprise Surprise* show is the subject of speculation that it may be axed. Photograph: LWT

The prize for artists who prefer painting to pickling



Contemporary classics: James Riehl's 'Secrecy' (left) and 'Orange' by Rose Wylie, two of the finalists for the £30,000 1997 Jerwood Prize, Britain's biggest art award, which is judged tomorrow

Jojo Moyes

Britain's biggest art prize will be judged tomorrow. But you are unlikely to have heard of it - even less to see much written about it.

The Jerwood Prize comprises a £30,000 award for painting, making it, against the Turner's £20,000, the most lucrative in British contemporary art. Yet the Turner Prize, with its pickled sheep and infant terrible stanzas, has consistently stolen the headlines.

The Turner, although it includes paintings, tends to favour the more fashionable and controversial conceptual and installation art. The artists on last year's shortlist, for example, had between them staged exhibitions featuring human bones, a sleeping actress, a video of naked men in the bath, and photographs of objects being thrown over the hills at Dover. There was not a single painter on the shortlist.

Organisers say one of the objectives of the Jerwood Prize is to provide a counterpoint, and highlight the quality of painting in Britain. Patricia Morison, development director of the Jerwood Foundation, which sponsors the prize, said yesterday that the Jerwood hoped to raise the profile of painting - a "quieter", but just as vibrant art. "Painting, she said, often did not get the space it deserved in galleries, or the acclaim from the wider public. "It's a bit like saying poetry is overlooked if you compared it to the novel. The novel surely gets a higher profile."

The prize was set up four years ago by the 20-year-old Jerwood Foundation, a private trust which supports arts, education, design and medicinal initiatives. Organisers said of it at the time: "The Jerwood shortlisted artists cannot, thankfully, be emblazoned as 'Young British', but what they produce

is just as much of the here and now as pickled sheep and concrete houses."

A distinguishing feature of the Jerwood, according to organisers, is that its judges are "strongly weighted" towards the academic, and are different every year. "There's plenty of space for people to make judgments unaffected by what is current fashion," Dr Morison said.

Unlike the Turner, the most controversy it has attracted came in 1995 when judges were unable to agree on a winner, and instead chose to split the prize between two of Britain's best known painters, Maggie Hambling and Patrick Caulfield.

Perhaps inevitably, in a contemporary art scene still dominated by the conceptual, the prize was initially criticised for being too "safe" and "middlebrow". This year, however, the shortlist is unlikely to attract such descriptions; it even

includes a former Turner shortlisted artist - Gary Hume.

Other artists on the shortlist are: Jane Harris; Louise Hopkins; Maria Lalic; Jason Martin; Joanna Price; James Riehl; Madeleine Surridge and Rose Wylie. They may be names unknown to the general public, but, as Dr Morison points out, even the most popular pursuits are unlikely to be followed by everyone. "Millions of people know the names of footballers, whereas the other half don't have a clue," she said.

The list has been narrowed down from nearly 1,000 submitted paintings. The judging is due to take place today, although the winner will not be announced until 29 September.

An exhibition of work from the nine candidates will be held at the Lethaby Galleries, Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in London from 30 September.

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Camera obscura: Paul Thompson puts an exhibit into storage at the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television in Bradford, which is closing down on 1 September for a £13m refurbishment. The museum will reopen to visitors early in 1999. Photograph: Andrew Buurman

One in six supermarket bills have the price wrong

Kim Sengupta

They are a bane of urban life – the people holding up queues at supermarket counters endlessly querying the price of baked beans or family size bottles of Ribena.

But next time you are gnashing your teeth stuck in such a queue, pause a while. These “shopping anoraks” may be far more astute than they appear. A survey has shown supermarket chains regularly overcharge shoppers for groceries.

No less than one in six till receipts at different stores were found to be wrong by volunteer shoppers carrying out research for *The Grocer* magazine. They had bought the same 33 products in stores all over Britain over a 12-week period. The mistakes included being charged twice for the same item and sometimes being billed for goods not even in the shopping basket. Hunting out discounted bargains was at times a waste of effort as the discounts did not register on the till, and were sometimes replaced by more expensive prices.

In the North-east, one shopper found he had been charged twice for a £1.25 bottle of Diet Coke at Sainsbury, while at Pontypriid, Wales, another was charged for something he had not bought. Occasionally the shopper actually won in the check-out lottery, one customer discovered

he had not been charged for a bottle of wine.

The errors occurred at Sainsbury, Tesco, Sainsbury and Morrisons, despite the fact the industry had invested millions of pounds on new technology at checkouts including barcode scanning. The supermarkets said most of the overcharging could be put down to human error.

Consumers could be said to be, in part, authors of their own misfortune. Few check their till rolls carefully after taking the shopping home, and even if they discover minor discrepancies they do not bother to complain.

A spokeswoman for *The Grocer* said: “We found human error was to blame in most cases. The speed at which some checkout staff pass items over scanners is bound to lead to mistakes. Very few people would notice these mistakes. We are talking about pennies. But we have spotted it as an issue and our shoppers have spotted these mistakes on their till rolls – it is a concern.”

A Consumers’ Association spokeswoman said: “The only way to be absolutely sure you are not paying over the odds is to go to the supermarket equipped with a calculator, notebook and pen, taking down what everything should cost and keeping a running total which can be compared with the total charged at the till.”

Diet pills bad for the heart, say doctors

Jeremy Laurance
Health Editor

Diet pills taken by millions of people have caused heart disorders in young women and should be banned for all patients, except those who are seriously obese, doctors say today. One 29-year-old woman, who had taken a combination of two appetite suppressants for just 23 days, died of pulmonary hypertension – increased resistance to the flow of blood through the lungs.

The American woman, who was 5ft 5in tall and weighed 13-and-a-half-stone, died eight months after stopping the drugs – fenfluramine and phentermine. A post-mortem examination indicated that lesions on her pulmonary arteries had developed as a result of brief exposure to the drugs.

Her case is described in today’s *New England Journal of Medicine* which also carries a report on 24 women who developed a disease of the heart valves after an average 12 months on the same drugs.

One of the 24 had taken the drugs for only one month. A third of the women had also developed pulmonary hypertension.

The *Journal* considered the findings of that study, conducted by a team from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, to be so serious that they allowed them to be released in advance of publication. A warning based on the findings, issued by the US Food and Drug Administration last month, led to reports of a further 28 cases from across the US, some associated with other appetite suppressants.

An editorial in the *Journal* says that the cases are “chilling reminders that succumbing to the allure of diet pills as a quick fix for excess weight may be courting disaster.” It says they carry a disturbing echo of previous outbreaks of pulmonary hypertension in Europe in the late 1960s and early 1990s, which were also linked with appetite suppressants.

Diet pills have become a national craze in the US, and their

use is growing in Britain. More than 18 million prescriptions for fenfluramine combined with phentermine were issued in the US in 1996. The *Journal* says the use of diet pills for cosmetic reasons should be banned until their risks are better known.

“The only justifiable medical use of anorectic [appetite reducing] drugs is in seriously obese patients who have obesity-related illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes and hypertension. For generally healthy people who want to lose a few pounds there are safer alternatives.”

A report on obesity by the UK Royal College of Physicians, published in May, concluded that the use of appetite suppressants in the very fat was justified where other methods of weight loss such as diet and exercise had failed.

It said obesity was a serious medical condition with an increased risk of joint disorders, heart disease and diabetes and even a 10 per cent loss of weight could significantly reduce these risks.

Exam board points to howlers of past

Judith Judd
Education Editor

If educational standards are falling, they have been falling for a very long time, an exam board suggested yesterday.

Tired of the annual round of complaints that GCSE and A-level exams are not what they were, the Associated Examining Board produced evidence that the cry of “standards are falling” goes back for nearly 140 years.

The GCSE, say the critics, is a doddle compared with its predecessor, the O-level. Yet, the board points out, in 1985, during the golden days of O-level four out of a group of 20 well-qualified trainee travel agents thought that Manchester

was in Scotland. One thought that Killarney was in Greece. On average, the group had six gross O-levels each.

In the same year, British Midland Airways complained to the board that the most common error among its trainee reservation staff was that Bangkok was in Hong Kong and Brussels in Amsterdam.

Complaints by examiners and employers that young people cannot spell, punctuate or write grammatically are scarcely new.

In 1931, the Junior County Scholarship Examination Report listed “two”, “twelf”, “fivety”, “hounded” and “severn” as commonly misspelt numbers.

“Spelling will always be a source of much trouble in our

language,” said the report. “There was much confusion over such words as ‘steel’ and ‘steal’, ‘wing’ and ‘ring’, ‘alms’ and ‘arms’, ‘Wales’ and ‘Whales’, ‘rays’ and ‘raise’ – It’s (the pronoun) was almost universally so spelt, though not greatly to the surprise of those who constantly receive letters subscribed ‘Your’s sincerely’.”

And if schools are blamed today for not teaching grammar, the critics are following in a long tradition. In 1858, examiners protested that “the principles of Grammar as exhibited in the English Language are not made a matter of systematic study in our schools.”

The examining board’s director responsible for liaising with industry, George Turnbull, said: “Almost 140 years later we hear the same comment from those who should know better. It’s time they stopped making a drama where there is no crisis – other than the one that has always been with us.”

“These examples illustrate that it was ever thus, and though we should always strive to improve, the euphoric glow of past grandeur and excellence in education must remain a fragment of a fertile imagination.”

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news

Army short of soldiers takes strain off recruits

Christopher Bellamy
Defence Correspondent

The army yesterday launched its new motto: "Build - Don't Break. Train - Don't Select", and introduced measures to increase recruitment. Despite being 5,000 soldiers short, John Reid, the armed forces minister, denied that the army would lower the standards expected of trained troops.

"Army training needs modernisation not mollycoddling", Dr Reid said. "Recruits will do more training, not less." Dr Reid was speaking at the launch of the new Army Training and Recruitment Agency at Pirbright, Surrey. This agency has been set up in the hope that the army will not only get enough recruits but keep them.

As part of the recruitment drive, the army will increase "pre-training" to a possible six weeks. Until last year, when pre-training was first introduced, 25 per cent of recruits were completely failing the basic training. Pre-training reduced that level to 17 per cent.



Turning a blind eye: The armed forces minister, John Reid, walks past a new recruit who fell while training

Photograph: Tom Pilsten

Political
Diana
stirs up
a row

Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

The Foreign Secretary stepped in to defend Princess Diana yesterday after she came under fire for telling a magazine that the Tories were "hopeless" on the issue of landmines.

But despite the Princess's apparent belief that Labour has been "straight" on the issue, and its imposition of a ban on the use of mines by British troops, *The Independent* has discovered that thousands of soldiers are still receiving training in how to plant them.

The Princess had been quoted in the French magazine *Le Monde* as saying: "Labour's position has always been absolutely clear. It's going to do terrific work. Its predecessor was absolutely hopeless."

Yesterday she was forced to issue a statement claiming that she had never made the criticism and had always remained apologetic. However, Robin Cook had already moved to capitalise on the reported comments.

"I am very pleased she recognises the Labour Government shares her concern and has already made very substantial progress towards signalling Britain's complete withdrawal from the production and trade in landmines. I have immense admiration for the courage she has shown in taking such a lead on this issue," he said.

Opposition politicians and anti-mines groups have reacted angrily to the revelation that a loophole in the moratorium announced in May has allowed British forces to continue exactly as they did before it.

The Royal Engineers, who make up 9 per cent of the army, with almost 10,000 troops, continue to be trained in the use, detection and countering of landmines. RAF fighter crews are still taught how to drop HB 876 bombs - also included in the ban - which are designed to sit in battlefield rubble and to explode when clearance teams move in.

Three people are killed or injured by landmines every hour in countries including Angola, Bosnia, Cambodia and Afghanistan. The weapons can remain in the ground for years before exploding when they are disturbed, often blowing off the limbs of farmers and villagers who return to their land.

In its manifesto, Labour promised an immediate moratorium on the use of mines, but when it made a formal announcement three weeks after the election it banned only "operational use," thus allowing training and testing to continue.

A further rider added that they could still be used if ministers believed they were necessary for the security of British forces.

A spokeswoman for the Ministry of Defence confirmed that testing and training were continuing as before, though the majority of training was in counter-mine measures. The Royal Engineers were taught anti-mine warfare while other soldiers going to areas such as Bosnia were given specific training.

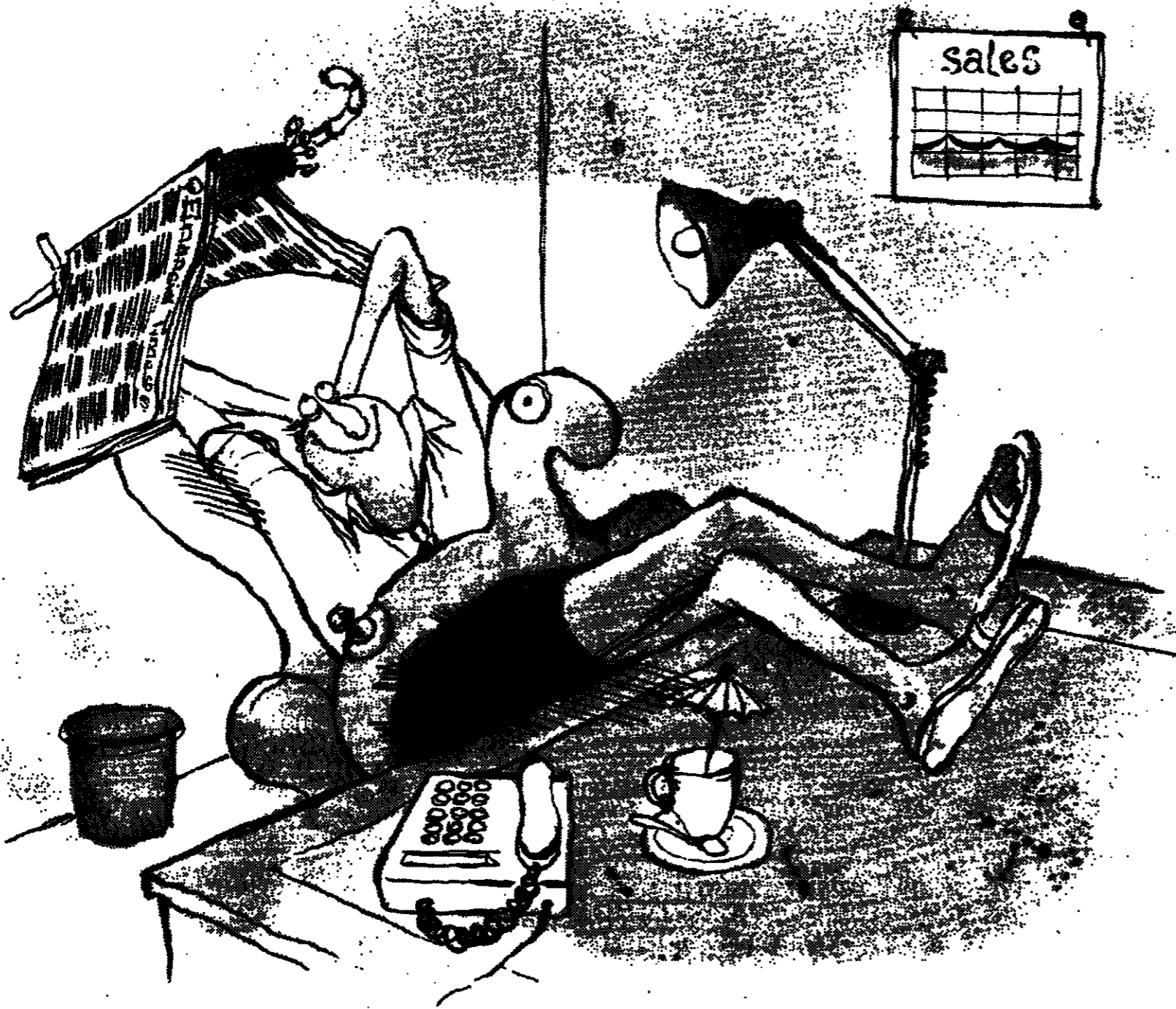
Troops need to maintain viability in case the situation should arise where it was necessary for the security of our troops. Ministers would obviously think very carefully before making such decisions," she said.

The ban will take full effect in 2005 if an international moratorium does not come in earlier. Britain has spent £30m since 1991 on mine clearance. There are no figures on how many mines Britain still holds, though it is believed there are tens of thousands. Half have now been destroyed with a view to phasing them out.

The Liberal Democrat defence spokesman, Menzies Campbell, said the public had been led to believe there was a complete ban. "Certainly it was not made clear to the House of Commons that this was the case. A little more frankness would have been welcome."

Letters, page 13

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A-levels win
image battle
with GNVQs

Judith Judd
Education Editor

Exam officials and ministers yesterday welcomed the growing popularity of vocational qualifications, introduced as an alternative to GCSE and A-level, but academics said they were failing to compete with A-levels.

More than 90,000 students achieved full General National Vocational Qualifications this year, an increase of more than 10 per cent on last year. For the advanced GNVQ, the proportion achieving the equivalent of at least one A-level was almost 70 per cent.

Kim Howells, the education and employment minister, said the Government was committed to strengthening vocational qualifications. "GNVQs continue to gain in popularity with some 240,000 students having achieved full GNVQ awards in the five years since the qualification was launched. They are a motivating and rewarding option for more and more young people," he said.

But Professor Alan Smithers of Brunel University said that advanced GNVQs were struggling to establish themselves in competition with A-level. There was an increase in completions

of only 6,000 this year compared to 1996, whereas in English A-level alone there were 7,000 more passes.

The proportion of students who successfully completed a full advanced GNVQ, the equivalent of two A-levels, fell slightly this year to just under half. Exam board officials said that it is too soon to say why the completion rate for advanced GNVQs was down. One possibility may be changes in the course.

Professor Smithers said: "GNVQs do not seem to be establishing themselves as the equivalent of A-level in the way that we hoped. They are seen as qualifications for people who cannot cope with A-level. We need to look again at 16-19 education and at the suggestion, for instance, that A-level and GNVQ Business Studies should come together as an applied A-level."

Unlike A-level and GCSE, there is no final exam for GNVQs. Instead, students' work is assessed by a series of pieces of coursework and tests which may take longer than two years to finish.

This year, the proportion of advanced GNVQ students who received offers of university places was 94 per cent, up 2 per cent on last year.

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**ALLIANCE
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The grass that heals starts its journey to Europe

THE MOROCCAN HARVEST

It looks like a bumper harvest, writes Elizabeth Nash, starting a series on marijuana in Morocco

Chefchaouen - The young woman flashed a smile and waved a cheery greeting as she approached across a stubbled field. She was bent double under a swaying burden of newly cut *kif*, the cannabis plant that produces the resin or hashish known throughout Europe as Moroccan black. The luxuriant fronds waved as she walked, sending fierce gusts of a pungent, heady aroma wafting on the breeze.

We had trekked for more than three hours up mountain paths behind the ancient Berber town of Chefchaouen in Morocco's northern Rif mountains, clambering among fragrant pines to reach precipitous limestone rocks. I wanted to see the *kif* harvest, and Mustafa (not his real name) took the opportunity to take me to the village where his family had some land.

The cultivable land around the little mountain hamlet was covered with dark green cannabis, or Indian hemp. We walked amid fields of *kif*, whose delicate serrated leaves brushed my shoulders. Densely-packed tips exuded a pungent gummy goop, and broke off in my fingers with a succulent "ping".

Mustafa warned me sternly to lose

my little souvenir before leaving the area. Cultivation is not illegal - no Moroccan government has dared to provoke a revolt among the warrior Berbers by banning their favourite agricultural activity - but possession and trafficking is severely punished.

Farmers predict that 1997 will be a bumper year.

"From the amount of land under cultivation, and the quality of the plant, I'd say we were in for a bigger crop than usual," reckoned one observer. "The sun and the rain came at the right time and in the right quantities."

In coming weeks, hundreds of tons of this season's Moroccan black will start its clandestine journey across the Mediterranean through Spain and the Netherlands, sub-divided from dealer to dealer with a bigger markup at every step, to end up for sale in London or Manchester at 50 times the price paid to small producers around Chefchaouen. Up to 70 per cent of hashish entering Britain is reckoned to originate from this remote but populous region, in an illegal trade that is prospering, despite efforts by the authorities to stamp it out.

The Grass That Heals, Allah's Chocolate and Madame Tranquille are among the local names, but, speaking in the Spanish lingua franca of the north, Mustafa called it simply *La Planta* - the plant.

It was Friday, and as we approached an ancient mosque, a dozen or so men who had gathered for prayers were sitting quietly under the fig trees in their long cream robes having a smoke. They showed me the long wooden pipe that unscrews into three handy pieces, with its tiny bowl into which they pressed a thumbful of this year's *kif* mixed with last year's tobacco. It was, they agreed, going to be a good year.



Smoke screen: Moroccan families would rather grow *kif*, or cannabis, which is twice as profitable as wheat and easier to tend

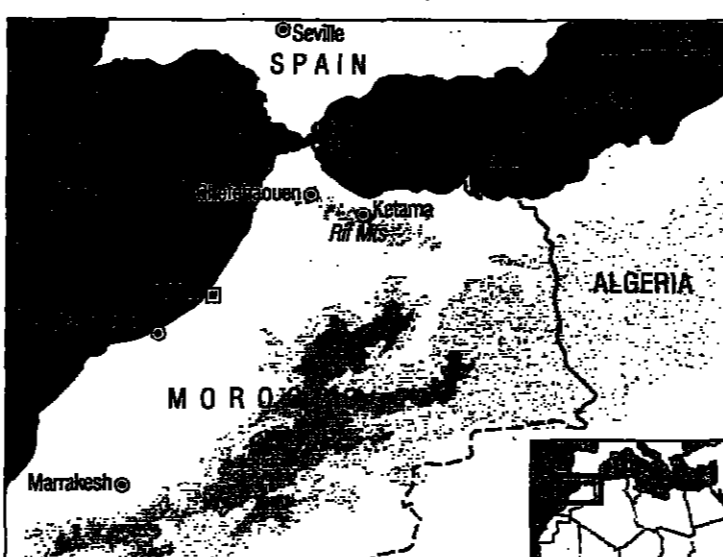
Photograph: Rex Features

All around, bundles of plant were laid tidily on the flat roofs of the villagers' houses, or on the ground, or on the little makeshift fences of tangled branches that delineated individual plots and stopped the goats from wandering.

Some of the stalks were being pecked by chickens, a good sign, Mustafa said. "When the chickens eat the plant they lay good eggs and more often."

We strode on and up, past a few rows of tomatoes and peppers, and a wedge of land devoted to maize. Many villagers do not even bother to grow subsistence crops, which need careful tending and watering. They prefer to grow *kif* - which flourishes without great attention - and barter at the market for staples like potatoes and onions. Mustafa thought there seemed far more land devoted to *kif* than when he last visited some years back.

Even the local agricultural authorities concede *kif* is twice as profitable as alternatives such as wheat, and that hefty subsidies will



be necessary to persuade farmers to grow alternative crops. "We have nothing else," the villagers say. There were few signs of affluence. We were invited into the one-

roomed house of Mustafa's relatives, a young couple with three children, and offered syrupy mint tea. *Kif* fronds peeped over the hole in the roof that served as a skylight, but his

kinsman complained at the lack of electricity. They boiled up the tin teapot over a butane gas cylinder and said that at night they had only gaslight. It was harsh and bright and made it difficult to adjust to the darkness, uncomfortable for a people who navigate mountain ranges by the moon and stars.

As we walked on across the mountain, looking down on the clusters of houses, we waved to a man sitting on his roof, carefully plucking off the leaves to keep to smoke at home, leaving the close-packed seeds and pollen heads - the eyes. In coming days, these would be laid over a fine straw net for the resin to seep through to be collected and pressed into dark brown tablets of hashish or chocolate.

The best quality hashish, the so-called Sputnik Double-zero, was from this first natural draining process. Then the farmers would gently tap and bruise the plant with a stick to produce more, though of inferior quality. A thousand kilos of plant produces 1kg of average

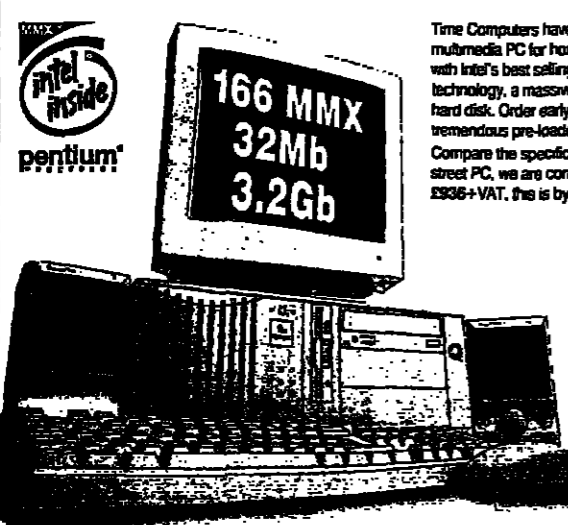
hashish or between 300g and 600g of the superior stuff.

Local traders would later comb the region, buying up the blocks, often loading them on mules for the 30- or 40-mile journey north through mountain passes to the sea, where bigger dealers, perhaps the Italian mafia or Spanish networks assisted by Britons on the Costa, would assume the risky - but immensely profitable - business of shipping the hashish, strapped into 30-kilo bails, to markets in the north.

On our way back down to Chefchaouen - whose name means "look at the horns of the mountain" - we ran the gauntlet of a group of smiling young goatherds, harrying their charges and tooting on their flutes. And as we neared the town, we came upon a wedding party, raucous with the music of strings and trumpets. Some little girls giggled and pranced in gold-threaded caftans and one paused to hitch her skirt clear of the ground, then skipped down the cobbled steps in her pointed velvet slippers.

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Death calls time for an old man at Safari Bar

James Roberts Likoni

They had done their best to clean the Safari Bar in Likoni yesterday, but it still smelled of blood. "It was all old man's blood," said Priscilla Laela, one of three women, all heavy with shock, who were watching over the otherwise empty premises. "He was my neighbour, my very good friend."

The friend she was talking about was Samuel Kamau, the owner of the bar, who was murdered along with his son, David, during an armed raid on Sunday evening. The raid was the latest atrocity to mark the run-up to Kenya's elections, the date of which President Daniel arap Moi is expected to spring on the nation at any moment. In the last elections, in 1992, the focus of violence was the Rift Valley. This year, it is Likoni, a sprawling township just across the water from Mombasa, where 46 people have been killed in the past two weeks.

Ms Laela was at the bar yesterday giving what support she could to two women Kamau employed to manage the place - Grace Sita, who was not working on the night of the attack, and 35-year-old Hadija Mohamed, who was.

Ms Laela explained that the Kamau family were away making the funeral arrangements. Then Hadija described what happened on Sunday night.

"Only one man came first," she said. "He wanted drinking water, and jumped over the gate. I told him there was no water, then another jumped over and opened the gate. The others invaded - about 100 of them. They wore uniforms, military clothes, and high boots - if you kick a door it just goes. They were armed with guns and everything."

"They went through to the owner's room, straight to it, they knew where it was. They stabbed the old man, cutting open his abdomen. After he fell, and his intestines fell out, they followed the son. The son said 'Don't kill me! The lady has all the money.' I gave them all the money, 34,800 shillings (£350) I gave them."



Sanctuary: Children in the grounds of the Catholic church, Likoni, where their families seek safety

They then took Hadija into the bush and threw her into a ditch, warning her that she was not to make a noise or they would come back and finish her. Otherwise, they were not going to kill her as she came from this area.

The police have not been vigorous in their pursuit of the killers. In fact, once they heard about the uniforms of the raiding party, they were gone within three minutes. Their caution is not surprising as the 46 dead include 10 of their number. Two decomposing bodies discovered outside Likoni on Monday were of officers missing since an attack on Likoni police station on 13 August, in which nine people, including several policemen, died. A large stockpile of arms was stolen after that

attack, an act to which Mr Moi responded by setting a deadline of one week for their return.

Likoni is a township of corrugated iron built on dirt roads. Its inhabitants, a mixture of local people and diverse incomers hoping to catch some of the trickle-down from the tourist boom, have rubbed along without ethnic conflict.

But now, the tension is palpable. The raiders have had one message. Up-country people must leave the area. And that message is being heeded. There is only one way in and out of Likoni, and that is by ferry from Mombasa. If the ferry were to stop, there would be no escape without the complication of deep water. The first thing to greet the visitor off the ferry is an abandoned police post.

Yesterday, scores of people acutely conscious of their vulnerability were pushing hand-carts packed with their belongings off the ferry and up the road into Mombasa. Around 2,000 up-country people who have decided to leave their homes but have nowhere else to go are camped out in the grounds of the Catholic church, protected by soldiers at the gate and a wall thorned down its length by shards of glass.

Even so, gunmen raided the compound last Friday and killed two people. And it is not possible to find anyone who believes that the raid on the Safari Bar will be the last.

US troops 'fought in Zaire'

John Lichfield Paris

US military advisers trained the Rwandan army, and former United States special services troops fought in the civil war in the former Zaire over the last two years, according to the French newspaper *Le Monde*.

The newspaper says that it has seen an internal Pentagon document which confirms that US military advisers helped to train Rwandan officers in combat command techniques.

Previously, the US had admitted only that its advisers were training Rwandans in mine removal and concepts of military justice.

The leaked document denies that serving US military personnel were involved with the Rwandan army inside Zaire, alongside the ultimately successful rebel forces of Laurent Kabila. But *Le Monde* says French intelligence sources believe that up to 60 former US special servicemen did serve on the front line of the civil war.

They were, ostensibly, recruited as mercenaries by private companies in the US, but this could have been a "deniable" front for US government policy.

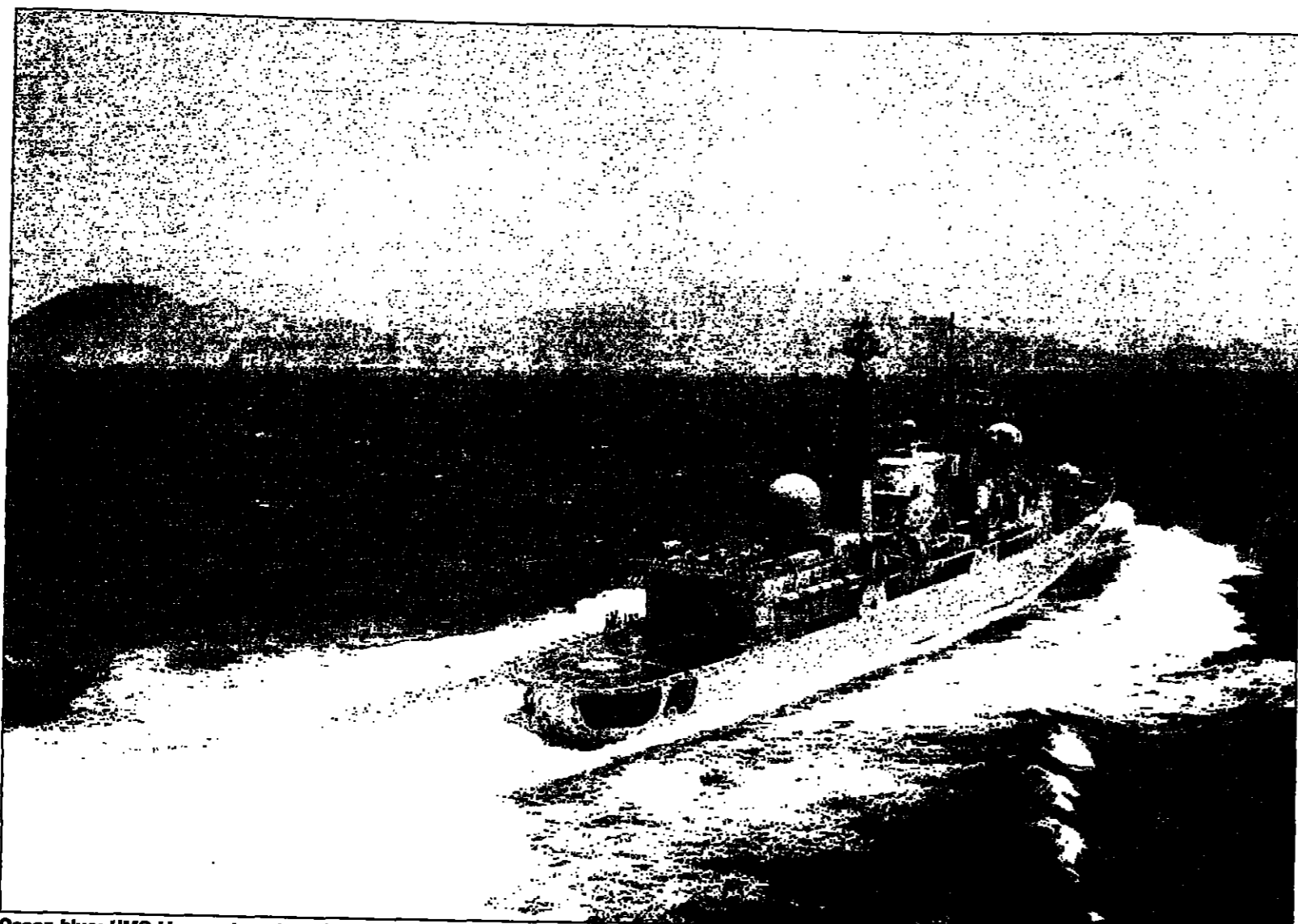
Paris has been deeply suspicious about US intentions in the region since the bloody Rwandan civil war of 1994 removed a genocidal pro-French Hutu regime in Kigali and replaced it with an Anglophone, pro-American Tutsi regime. French officials have suggested that the Rwandan-supported rebellion against President Mobutu Sese

Seko was materially supported by Washington. There have been unproven counter-suggestions that French mercenaries served with Mobutu's forces.

The document seen by *Le Monde* was prepared for a Congressional committee investigating claims by a US group, Physicians for Human Rights, of direct US involvement in the Zairian conflict. The paper denies this allegation. But it admits that 200 US troops trained Rwandans in "tactical skills" and "basic rifle marksmanship".

مركز من الامم

Cook steams into Montserrat crisis



Ocean blue: HMS Liverpool went to Montserrat to supervise the evacuation, but most people have opted to stay Photograph: Jon Garthwaite/Royal Navy

Foreign Secretary orders policy review of dependent territories

From Abrams
Political Correspondent
Steve Crawshaw
Kuala Lumpur

Robin Cook has launched a six-month review of Britain's Dependent Territories after admitting to a failure of communication over the Montserrat crisis. It also emerged last night that the House of Commons Select Committee on International Development is to reconvene to draw up a report on the Government's handling of the issue.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials will be asked to talk to each of the remaining 12 dependencies in the run-up to a major policy speech to the Dependent Territories Association (DTA) in February.

The Foreign Secretary said: "There has clearly been a failure of communication over the last few weeks - but not one of policy. We will go through the dozen territories and produce a custom-made solution for each one. The aim is to give them confidence that we are committed to them for the future. We want to give them the maximum opportunity to get on with their own business."

Mr Cook, speaking to journalists on his aircraft en route to South-east Asia, said that a review of policy on the dependent territories would be completed by next February, when he will address a DTA conference. The announcement won a warm reception from the DTA yesterday. Its chairman, Rom Russell, said: "We welcome the statement by the Foreign Secretary about the review of the dependent territories, in particular that he has taken a personal interest."

Mr Cook acknowledged that concerns over the future of Hong Kong and its 6.5 million inhabitants had dwarfed thinking on Britain's other dependencies in the past. The remaining territories include the Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, Bermuda, the Cayman Islands, St Helena and the Pitcairn Islands.

It also emerged last night that the select committee planned an investigation into the background to the Montserrat crisis. Bowen Wells, the Tory MP who chairs the committee, said he had written to its members and expected them to agree to reconvene. Some would probably visit the island.

"We recognise that this is an emergency and that there are very serious accusations being handed round. I think it is likely that we should get to the bottom of it," he said.

The Liberal Democrats claimed credit for both announcements last night, saying

they had nudged both the government and Mr Wells into action. Menzies Campbell, the party's foreign affairs spokesman, said he had written to Mr Cook on the matter last week. He added that the review should lead to an offer of British citizenship for all the inhabitants of the territories - at present they do not have the right to live here.

"The people of the dependent territories are British subjects and it is time they were treated with the respect they deserve," he said.

After the sidelining on Monday of Clare Short, Secretary of State for International Development, Mr Cook issued a statement which appeared to praise Ms Short and her department for the work that they had done.

But Foreign Office officials do not hide their disdain for the way that Ms Short and her deputy, George Foulkes, have handled matters. As one official noted: "They haven't done the best of jobs in winning hearts and minds in recent days."

Ms Short was keen to take responsibility for managing the volcano crisis, when it first erupted. Mr Cook is unlikely to regret the fact that Ms Short has been left with political egg on her face. The apparent message is that a "safe pair of hands" is needed.

Leading article, page 13

Cramped islanders find a listening ear

Phil Davison
On board HMS Liverpool

The Rev Sally Theakston, the only female Anglican chaplain in the Royal Navy, came on board this British destroyer on Tuesday to help the warship's crew and onshore Montserratians cope with volcano-related stress.

The chaplain came on board at St John's, Antigua, with the role of being "a friend and adviser, and a listening ear, to all on board and to any Montserratians I can help".

Ms Theakston, a leading figure in the fight to have women ordained, said she felt close to the islanders because there were many Montserratians in her earlier Anglican church congregation of St John at Hackney. "I have two bosses, God and the captain," she said.

The 4-5,000 Montserratians still on the island are increasingly complaining of stress, not only over the threat of another

major volcanic eruption but because of cramped living conditions in the tiny northern zone where they are now squeezed.

The 250-member crew of the Liverpool, including around 30 women, are suffering mainly from a continuing cloudstream of black volcanic ash, which gets into the eyes and throat. The ash was particularly thick on Tuesday as Captain David Snelson took the ship past the abandoned capital of Plymouth, now a light grey wasteland of boulder-battered, burnt-out and ash-covered buildings.

The HMS Liverpool came to Montserrat to supervise the "voluntary evacuation" of those of the remaining islanders who opted to leave for nearby islands or Britain. But as the volcano quietened down last week, most people opted to stay. "We came here expecting a large evacuation that hasn't happened," Captain Snelson said. "There are more people going back to

Montserrat than leaving," according to one of his officers.

Although 1,000 islanders registered for the evacuation, only 35 left during the first three days. There have usually been at least that number on the daily ferry going in the opposite direction. Some of these are relatives coming back to help their families pack. Others are evacuees who are now more confident the volcano will not affect the north of the island and that it will be developed with British aid.

"We have made some changes. When we announced yesterday that people would be able to get their airline tickets [from Antigua to Britain] here on the island, a cheer went up," said Mary Storde, of the aid management office of the Department for International Development. "We think that system will be more popular and it saves us money on Antigua hotels. People didn't like the idea of going to Antigua and waiting."

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international

Milosevic enters Bosnian fray

Andrew Gumbel

Slobodan Milosevic, the strongman of Serbia, looks set to fly into Serb-controlled Bosnia today or tomorrow – his first visit to the region since the height of the war – to intervene in the increasingly bitter power struggle between supporters of his erstwhile protégé, Radovan Karadzic, and the current darling of the western diplomats, the Bosnian Serb President, Biljana Plavsic.

A Nato spokesman in Sarajevo said that Mr Milosevic had sought permission to fly from Belgrade to Banja Luka, Mrs Plavsic's headquarters, sometime later this week and the trip looked like a classic Milosevic manoeuvre to ensure that, whatever the outcome of the crisis, he would get the credit for clearing it up.

The power struggle in the so-called Republika Srpska, as the Serb-held north and east of Bosnia is known, has reached

new heights of bitterness since the weekend, when Mrs Plavsic succeeded in wresting control of the Banja Luka studios of state-controlled television.

Thanks almost certainly to the noisy support she has received from the West, she has also won over as many as half the deputies in the Bosnian Serb parliament, a sizeable chunk of the police and possibly 50 per cent of the mini-state's army commanders.

Mr Karadzic's followers, led

by the Serb member of the three-man Bosnian federal presidency, Momcilo Krajcinovic, have seen their power base in Pale, in the mountains above Sarajevo, gradually chipped away since the crisis erupted in July.

Western governments are portraying the conflict as a stand-off between a pragmatic Mrs Plavsic – seen as willing to take steps to implement the Dayton peace accords – and a hardline Mr Krajcinovic, who is denounced as a black marketer

interested ultimately in partitioning Bosnia into two or three separate units.

The reality is more complicated than that, since Mrs Plavsic is an unrepentant nationalist with some highly unsavoury characters in her camp. While it is true that Mr Krajcinovic has been organising a highly lucrative black economy, he is also believed by local observers to be capable of pragmatic talk as long as the pay-off is attractive enough. A key fac-

tor in the whole equation is Mr Karadzic, the number-one wanted man at the international war crimes tribunal.

The struggle boils down to that subject on which Mr Milosevic is so learned – power. Up to now, the master manipulator of Balkan politics has played both sides against the middle, overtly supporting Mrs Plavsic one day while making little secret of keeping lines of communication open with the other side.



Seedy affair: Throwers enjoying the annual Tomatina yesterday, the biggest tomato fight in the world, held in Bunyol, eastern Spain

Photograph: Reuters

Jospin buoyed up by the economic tide

Everything is going right for Lionel Jospin: except for those things which are beginning to go wrong.

The French Prime Minister travels to Bonn today to give what amounts to a political and economic progress report to Chancellor Helmut Kohl. Since their last, difficult tête-à-tête in Potters in June, Mr Jospin's position has been greatly strengthened, partly through luck, partly through skill.

The French economy is picking up: the markets have swallowed, for now, the promise that France will almost make the entry guidelines for monetary union this year: the franc remains usefully weak but not in free-fall; inflation barely exists; exports are booming; opinion polls are encouraging: the right-wing opposition is mostly engaged in savaging itself. For once, the Franco-German summit may be more preoccupied with German political and economic problems than French ones.

But Mr Jospin faces a somewhat rougher ride when he goes on to the "summer university" of his own

French Prime Minister enjoys greater popularity in his country than with his political allies, writes John Lichfield in Paris

Socialist party in La Rochelle at the weekend. After three months of grace, the radical wing of the party, and Mr Jospin's Communist and Green coalition partners, are beginning to growl at his methodical and centrist approach to government.

The immediate cause of the unrest is not economic. The left has reluctantly accepted that Maastricht will take precedence over most of the economic ideas on which the Socialists campaigned successfully in May. There is to be no large increase in state spending; the plan to reduce the working week to 35 hours will probably be put off for three years; the promise of 700,000 state-paid or subsidised jobs for the young will be phased in gradually; there will be no miraculous cure for unemployment. Everything will be mortgaged to Maastricht and an up-

turn in growth (now forecast to reach 3 per cent next year).

In return, parts of the left and the Greens had hoped for some form of emotionally-satisfying, symbolic leftward shift in cost-free social policy, especially on immigration. Mr Jospin let it be known this week, however, that he would introduce only cosmetic changes to the restrictions on immigration, and the tougher controls on illegal immigration, introduced by successive right-wing governments.

This has been greeted as a betrayal. Hundreds of thousands of left-leaning French people, led by prominent intellectuals, demonstrated against the previous government's toughening of the laws in March. Mr Jospin himself (reluctantly) joined one of the demonstrators. The Socialist programme to abolish

all the laws and start from scratch. In fact, the proposals put forward by the interior minister, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, accepted the thrust of a judicial inquiry and suggested that the existing laws be softened in places but mostly preserved. The Greens warned yesterday that the proposals "would cause a serious crisis of confidence, within the governing majority, and between this majority and its electors". A Socialist deputy, Yann Galut, warned that Mr Jospin would have enormous difficulties getting the proposals through the National Assembly.

The issue is a dangerous one for Mr Jospin. It divides the Socialists down one of their most explosive fault lines: between the mostly middle-class "moral" left on the one hand and the more working-class "economic" left on the other. Mr Chevènement, head of a populist,

Socialist splinter party, is one of the fiercest opponents of Maastricht but close to white, working-class opinion on immigration. His silence on the pro-EMU approach of the Jospin administration may depend partly on being given his own way on immigration policy.

What is more surprising is that Mr Jospin's retreat from campaign promises across a broad front has not damaged his popularity in the country. It was precisely the accusation that they had campaigned on one set of policies, and governed with others, which mortally damaged the previous administration of Alain Juppé. Mr Jospin is getting away with it, so far.

As Le Figaro said yesterday, the Prime Minister has perfected the art of "walking backwards on tip-toes". How to explain this paradox? Partly, it seems, the French instinctively like and trust the school-masterly Mr Jospin, where they instinctively disliked and distrusted the bureaucratic Mr Juppé. But the sense of a rising economic tide may also be buoying up Mr Jospin's popularity.

significant shorts

Israelis ease travel ban curbs on Palestinians

Responding to local and international pressure, Israel last night lifted a month-long ban on Bethlehem Arabs travelling to other parts of the West Bank. The army also began to let Christian pilgrims from abroad visit Jesus's birthplace unimpeded. Like the rest of the 2 million West Bank and Gaza Strip Palestinians, however, the 60,000 inhabitants of Bethlehem and its neighbouring villages are still barred from entering Israel. The closure was imposed after two suicide bombers killed 14 Israeli civilians in a Jerusalem market on 30 July.

Eric Silver – Jerusalem

N Korea suspends US talks

North Korea followed the defection of a high-level diplomat by suspending talks with the US designed to curb its missile sales abroad and a build-up at home. It told the State Department that its negotiators were returning to Pyongyang. The talks were due to open yesterday in New York and run for three days.

AP – Washington

Disco bombing suspect held

Musabih Abulghasem Eter, a Libyan who fled Germany after allegedly confessing to a role in the 1986 bombing of a Berlin disco was arrested as he strolled down a Rome street. The disco bombing killed two US soldiers and a Turkish woman, and injured 230, many of them American soldiers. The attack prompted the US administration to order the bombings of Libya's two biggest cities in April 1986.

AP – Rome

Paris's new spymaster

France appointed a left-winger, Jean-Jacques Pascal, to head the country's counter-espionage operations, the Direction de la Surveillance du Territoire. He has been police personnel director and head of the Renseignements Generaux, the political intelligence unit.

Reuters – Paris

Croatian Serbs trek home

More than 200 Croatian Serbs left the enclave of Eastern Slavonia to return to their homes across Croatia in the biggest such movement so far. Eastern Slavonia, which has been run by the UN for a year and a half, should revert to Zagreb rule in January next year. Between 110,000 and 140,000 Serbs are estimated live there.

Reuters – Zagreb

Orthodox approach

The head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Alexiy II, said that "North American standards" of freedom of religion should not be applied to Russia. "We must completely bar proselytising," Alexiy said, referring to "non-traditional" faiths, following a meeting with the archbishop of Vienna.

Reuters – Moscow

Follow that car

Police in the Brazilian city of Recife were left without transport after authorities seized about 100 stolen cars being used by officers. "It was normal practice for detectives and inspectors to commandeered stolen cars and use them as if they were their own," said Pedro-Francisco da Silva, a spokesman for the security department of Pernambuco state.

Reuters – Brasilia

Swiss sterilisation scandal

Swiss women's groups reacted with shock and outrage to revelations by a historian that doctors sterilised mentally handicapped patients against their will under a law passed in 1928. Hans Ulrich Jost, a professor of history at the University of Lausanne, told Swiss television that many Swiss people – nine out of 10 of them women – were affected by the campaign in the French-speaking western canton of Vaud. He said that a copy of the law, which was passed in Vaud in 1928, was requested by Adolf Hitler in 1934 as a basis for Nazi Germany's own racist legislation.

Reuters – Geneva

Sweden's Olympic fears

A week before the 2004 Olympics site is chosen, Stockholm's hopes of winning are overshadowed by threats that terrorists will strike again. A shadowy extremist group opposed to Stockholm's bid claimed responsibility for Monday's bombing of Sweden's largest stadium, the New Ullevi in Goteborg. The claim was contained in a letter sent from Sweden and received by The Associated Press in London.

AP – Stockholm

Gulf Americans warned

The US embassy in Kuwait told Americans in the Gulf state to be cautious after a caller warned of a possible attack against a US target today.

Reuters – Kuwait

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Japanese aim high with Concorde-san

Richard Lloyd Parry
Tokyo

The Japanese government is developing a supersonic passenger aircraft, three times the size of Concorde, which could fly between Tokyo and London in little more than five hours.

Concorde-san, as the new project is likely to become known, is intended to carry 300 passengers, about the same size as the current generation of sub-sonic jetliners. It will fly at a speed of Mach 2.4 compared to Mach 0.85 for a Boeing 747-400, drastically reducing the current flight time of 11 to 13 hours between Japan and western Europe.

Financially viable supersonic travel is one of the holy grails of the aerospace industry. But the high cost of the technology, has so far rendered projects like the Concorde unprofitable. The Japanese aircraft is being developed by the Ministry of Trade and International Industry in collaboration with a consortium of private companies including Mitsubishi Heavy Industries.

Last year, the ministry spent 3.75bn yen (£20m) on the research and development of a Mach 5 supersonic engine known as HYPR, and it is hop-



An artist's impression of the Japanese supersonic passenger aircraft to rival Concorde Photograph: Quadrant Picture Library

ing to spend ¥800m in 1998 on developing materials for building a supersonic aircraft body. The aluminium alloy currently used in passenger jets cannot withstand the 200 degrees centigrade temperatures generated through wind resistance during supersonic flight, and Mitsubishi hopes to come up with a carbon fibre compound alloy capable of performing the task.

Japan's aerospace industry has had little impact on the international market, largely because the country's post-war "peace constitution" forbids it from exporting any military equipment or technology. A number of civilian aircraft have

been developed but they have all been commercial failures, and the latest effort, a small passenger jet called the YSX, is a "paper plane" and has not been manufactured in large numbers. "They've proved that they can build aircraft, but the problem is selling and supplying them in competition with far more experienced companies like Boeing and Airbus," said Paul Lewis, Asia editor of Flight International. "Their imagination has been caught by the dream of producing something futuristic for the 21st century, but if they've continually failed to build a small 100-seat jet, it's unlikely that they'll ever do it on their own."

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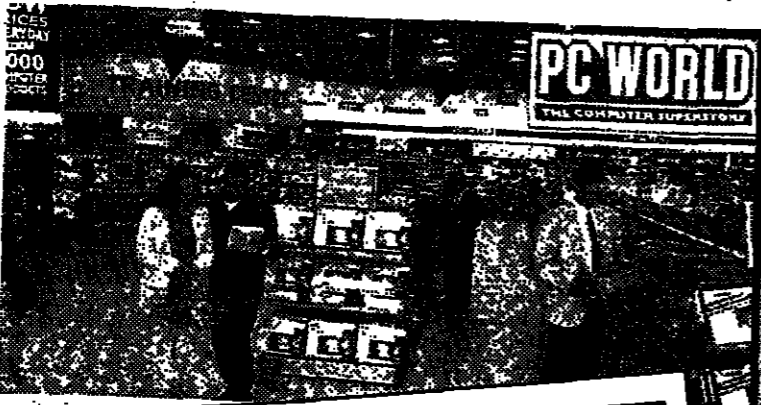
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David Warbeck

When David Warbeck first arrived in London from New Zealand in 1965 he must have quickly realised that his face was his fortune. Possessed of that brand of good looks usually described as ruggedly handsome, his powerfully masculine presence was the very stuff of an action-man hero or of the dashing, firm-jawed lover on the cover of a Barbara Cartland romance.

He went on to achieve cult status as the star of a whole series of cheaply made, racy Italian action movies, but it was as a photographic model that he quickly earned his early success, becoming a familiar image in countless advertising shots across the world promoting everything from Courvoisier brandy and Marlboro cable-knit pullovers, blue jeans and ice-cream. His modelling career proved lucrative and through the Seventies and Eighties he could command £300,000 for a couple of television commercials.

However the dual career he pursued for less money but with far greater zest – and which appealed far more to his cheerfully extrovert sense of adventure and fun – was as an actor in a huge number of shock and horror movies. During 25 feverishly busy years he appeared in nearly 80 films. Most were Italian, many of deplorable quality, and nearly all of a genre known as exploitation or exploitation films – and sometimes, to those in the know, as “spaghetti splatter”.

In 1972 he got his first Italian film job in *A Fistful of Dollars*, actually a superior spaghetti western, directed by the redoubtable Sergio Leone, in which he was spotted by a wily Italian talent agent who secured him, five years later, the starring role in *The Last Hunter* which not only placed Warbeck firmly in the lead but had him cruelly menaced by strafing helicopter fire, rats, snakes, giant spiders and some appalling oriental actors.

Bearing such titles as *Car O'Nine Tails*, *Killer Fish*, *Zombie Flesh Eaters* and *Cosmic Killer*, the posters for Warbeck's films invariably depict him fending off, with appropriate fortitude, a whole barrage of lethal dangers including giant cobras, naked female vampires, whole armories of deadly weapons, death rays from outer space, man-sized rats and frequently blonde bimbos.

As a seasoned traveller in the gory land of schlock Warbeck's forte was to shoulder the burden of these absurd inventions with a light and easy assurance and much self-effacing charm, retaining in the face of all this lurid mayhem a reasonably straight-faced dignity. The fact was that he relished the nonsense which frequently enabled him to appear with such distinguished veterans as Joan Crawford, Ava Gardner, Anthony Quinn, Jack Palance and Peter Cushing and he always expressed amused incredulity when the vagaries of changing taste elevated what Warbeck himself had regarded as cheerful, simple-minded trash high in the esteem of the fashionably avant-garde.

Six years ago the defiantly tasteless Russ Meyer was awarded a retrospective at the National Film Theatre when clips were shown from *Black Snake – the whip!* (1973) in which Warbeck had starred opposite the ubiquitously fashionable Anoushka Hempel. Warbeck's career too, was celebrated in 1994 at the Everyman Cinema, Hampstead, with screenings of his films such as *City of the Living Dead* and *Zombie Flesh Eaters* and at which he made a appearance accompanied by his long-time director, Lucio Fulci.

Warbeck, born David Mitchell, in Christchurch, New Zealand, was of Scottish descent and after school in Christchurch and Invercargill he went on to train as an arts teacher. He also

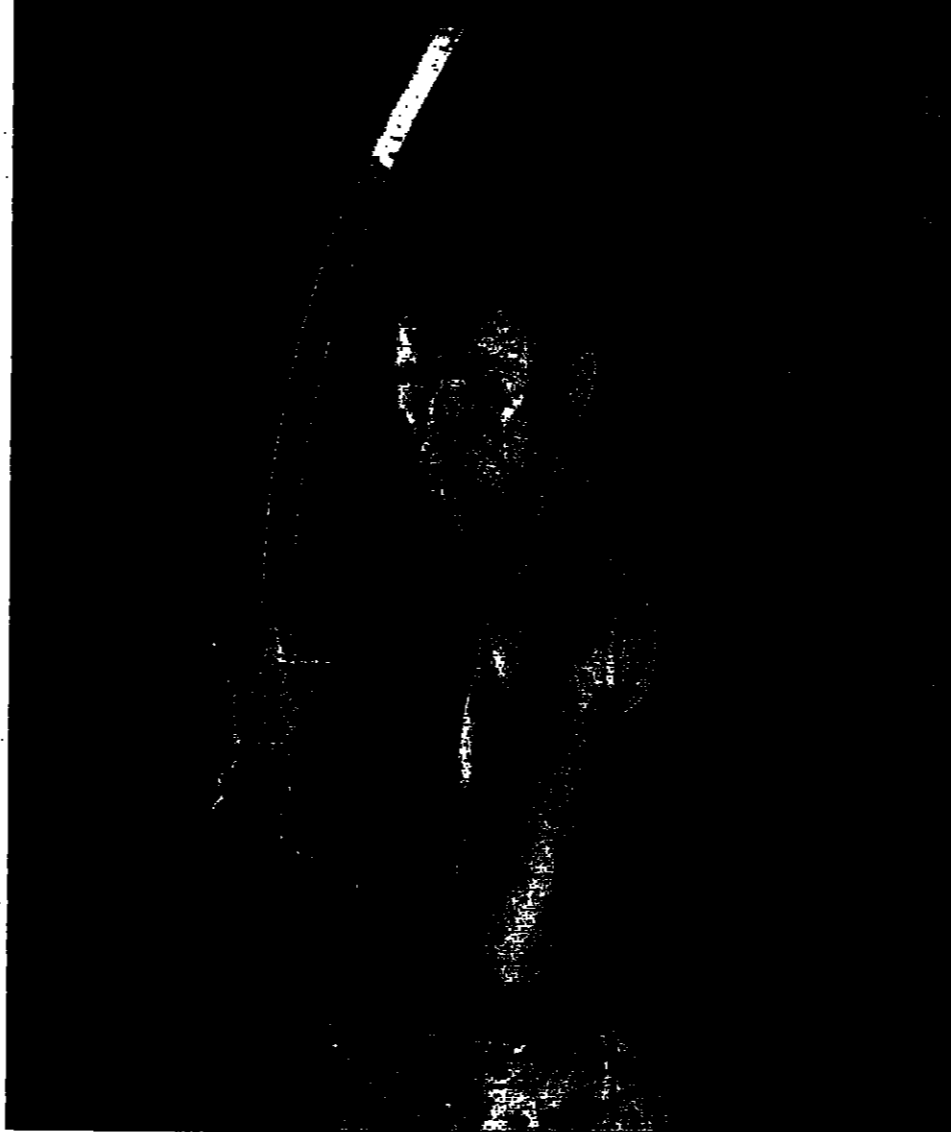
took up amateur dramatics where his dashing good looks and natural aptitude quickly got him accepted by a small professional company which toured local schools.

It was there that his work was rewarded with a New Zealand Arts Council scholarship to RADA. With his bride of one month he arrived in London in 1965 and enrolled at RADA where he remained for only four terms. His failure to finish at drama school did little to dent his progress, however, and alongside his burgeoning career as a photographic model he began to appear regularly on television and in rep. Appropriately enough his first major role in the cinema was in 1971 in the Hammer horror film *Twins of Evil*, featuring a pair of vampiric fanged sisters.

A year later came *A Fistful of Dollars* and his break into the realm of Italian shock-horror. The big disappointment of his career, which prevented him from becoming universally known, was when he just missed being selected from the short list of contenders to play James Bond, following in the footsteps of Sean Connery and Roger Moore.

Warbeck was a warm, gregarious man with a boisterous sense of humour who was genuinely beguiled by the fact that what he called “my truly awful films” became taken up by the new connoisseurs of schlock. With his easy, open, down-under charm he was also a generous and convivial host who liked nothing better than to entertain with his wife, Lois, and his long-time friend David Lehal, at his extraordinary turreted Hampstead palazzo.

Known as the convent, this high Victorian gothic folly was built by associates of Sir George Gilbert Scott at the time of the construction of St Pancras Station and had been the scene of many a musical soiree when Gilbert and Sullivan, George



Warbeck in *Ark of the Sun God*, one of “my truly awful films”, taken up by new connoisseurs of schlock

Grossmith and Ellen Terry would perform in the house's miniature salon theatre. For two decades David Warbeck lovingly devoted himself to the convent's restoration achieving an effect that was almost overwhelming, its cavernous crisscross interior displaying a heady mix of mirror and gilt, co-

fered ceilings, pointed arches, falling draperies and glistening knick-knacks, all merged together into a spectacular and eclectic fusion of camp and kitsch and the authentically Victorian. It could have served as the backdrop for one of his more exotic movie adventures, but for the ebullient British hero of Ital-

ian schlock it provided the perfect setting.

Derek Granger

David Mitchell (David Warbeck), actor and model: born Christchurch, New Zealand 17 November 1941; married 1965 Lois Shepherd (one daughter); died London 23 July 1997.



Skelton: a poet, then a teacher

longs not to one part but to the whole tradition of English poetry. True though this is, with the formula being more “English poetry” than “poetry in English languages”. Skelton's move to Canada was undeservedly at the expense of attention to his work in the UK since.

Jon Silkin

Robin Skelton, poet, critic and English scholar: born Eastington, East Yorkshire 12 October 1925; Assistant Lecturer in English, Manchester University 1951; Lecturer 1954; Associate Professor of English, University of Victoria, British Columbia 1963-66; Professor of English 1966-91; Founder Chairman of Department of Creative Writing 1973-76; married 1957 Sylvia Jarrett (one son, two daughters); died Victoria, British Columbia, Canada 22 August 1997.

Professor Robin Skelton

Two important strands contribute to the rich life of the poet Robin Skelton. Six years ago he retired from the Department of English (and Department of Creative Writing, which he had founded) at the University of Victoria, British Columbia. He was, as he said of himself, first a poet, then a teacher; yet the teacher is a subtle ingredient in his work.

In 1963 he published a volume modestly called *Poetry in the “Teach Yourself” series*, and in 1971 *The Practice of Poetry* appeared, both of which may indicate a two-fold approach to poetry. First, that to do it you must know how to do it; secondly, that endowed with the creative energy, one can bring oneself to do it. Within these limitations, creative energy is teachable, and on these principles all creative writing departments are predicated. However, the stress on the “how-to” which leads on to the “able-to” itself indicates a component in the character of Skelton's own poetry.

In 1964 he edited (with an introduction) for Penguin Books the influential and important *History of the Thirties*, and although Skelton claimed, rightly, to have responded in his poetry to many other poets, the attention to the Thirties poets, the work of

David Gascoyne and Dylan Thomas notwithstanding, shows him to be not a modernist poet but a contemporary one, of the “tell” side of the dictum “show not tell”. The vigour of his work fuses with the impulse to tell and interpret how the experience is, rather than to show how it is, and in this he is not so much the modernist as having more in common with younger poets writing now.

This positioning of the self, and re-creative self, with experience, is visible in “Eagle”. Some affinity exists between this poem and Ted Hughes's “Hawk Roosting”, in theme and in rhythm, but even the staunchest modernist would concede that Skelton's approach (“telling”) here widens the aperture of vision (in both meanings) to provide a view of man from the eagle's Olympian position. “I kill what I can bring into my height.” Equally, what is compelling in the poem is not so much the eagle's capacity to view up a height as what it is he sees – man with a small but not redemptive “m”. Humans in their essence are composed of limitations. For although it is the small(er) creature the eagle can and does lift up to their destruction,

they watch the dwindling of their day, perceive

the small earth small, self-cancelling, and share the shock that is the last discovery, here they learn abandonment of every word

and are self-rent before I read . . .

So it is by compelling analogy that as the eagle sees these small creatures available to his predatory nature, so the reader

ers, through the eagle's interpretive vision, see humanity available to death's certainty. And in this we abruptly realise the traditional depths of Robin Skelton's art and psyche: . . . Image me as God. I am the final judgement and the rock.

So where Hughes is still (comparatively) predator-

‘Eagle’

Vertigo is my territory. Man only another movement, another shift in arrangement of shadows beneath my shadow, angular, thick-boned, cumbersome, and bad meat.

I do not trouble him or the larger kind, having no love of eating on the ground; I kill what I can bring into my height, what I can raise up until, terror-stricken,

they watch the dwindling of their day, perceive the small earth small, self-cancelling, and share the shock that is the last discovery; here they learn abandonment of every word

and are self-rent before I read and eat what they already have forgotten, locked on fear and splendour. Image me as God. I am the final judgement and the rock.

From *New Oxford Book of Canadian Verse in English* (Oxford University Press, 1982)

Jean Poperen

Jean Poperen was well known in French politics for some 50 years. From the 1970s he was one of the leaders of the Socialist Party. But it is significant that he only held ministerial office once, when he held the somewhat non-ministerial post of Minister in Charge of Relations with Parliament in the government of Michel Rocard from 1988 to 1992. Poperen was concerned with ideas and with the organisation of the party around those ideas.

Perhaps he preferred being in opposition. He was often accused of being too caught up with detail. His colleague Lionel Jospin, the present Prime Minister, is supposed to have said to him, “You are difficult”. To which the reply came, “I’m a socialist”. The opponents of socialism used to make much of Poperen's interventions in So-



Poperen: constant opposition

cialist Party conferences. They were often preceded by newspaper articles, much rumour and gossip, and they were eagerly awaited. Then, his opponents gleefully observed, he said very little. His constant op-

position and criticism was partly a matter of temperament. But it was also a matter of intellectual probity. Poperen saw himself as being in the line of the “République des professeurs”.

Born in 1925 at Angers, Poperen's father was a school-teacher and his mother, who died when he was very young, a seamstress. He won a scholarship to the Lycée Louis le Grand in Paris and in 1943, when he was just 18, he joined the Resistance. In April 1944, before the Allied landings, he took part in a dangerous demonstration on the Boulevard Saint Michel, handing out Communist leaflets.

After the Liberation he became the leader of the Communist students. His academic career was very successful. In 1947 he came first in the prestigious examination of the agree-

ment in history and taught in the lycées at Amiens and at Janson-de-Sailly in Paris, before being appointed to the Sorbonne as a specialist in the French Revolution. He wrote an admiring biography of Robespierre, *Œuvres Choieses de Robespierre*, published in three volumes 1956-58.

But the Communist Party thought that his future lay with them. In 1953 he was sent to the Kominform centre in Bucharest. He remained a member of the party at a time when many others were leaving. Although he criticised Soviet actions he did not wish to desert his fellow-members. The celebrated Khrushchev report in 1956, condemning Stalinism, did not persuade Poperen to abandon the cause; he wanted rather a Marxist analysis of Stalinism. But he could only

condemn the ineffectiveness of the party as the political situation of the Fourth Republic worsened in the course of 1958. He was under the surveillance of Philippe Robieux, the future historian of the party and biographer of Thorez. Poperen was expelled in 1959 after he had written, along with other Communist intellectuals, a condemnation of the party that had accepted the coming to power of Charles de Gaulle and the defeat of the French working class.

He was one of the leaders of would-be independent socialist parties, particularly that directed by Michel Rocard. He was expelled from this in 1967, and after some ineffective wandering, became part of the reformed Socialist Party that emerged from the congress at Epinay in 1971 with François

Mitterrand at its head. But Poperen was never an unconditional follower of Mitterrand, and there was always a group, “une tendance”, which represented his views. At this date some 12 per cent of party representatives supported Poperen, an important section in a divided party.

In 1973 he was elected as deputy in the Rhône, a position he was to hold for the next 20 years. In 1977 he became Mayor of Meyzieu, also in the Rhône, two years after he had joined the Secretariat of the Socialist Party. With Mitterrand being elected President of the Republic in 1981, Poperen became the number two of the party, with Lionel Jospin as the number one. But Poperen's promises of being a loyal supporter of the government suffered a setback when the

education law which sought to bring private (mainly religious) schools into a closer alignment with state schools was suddenly withdrawn. Mitterrand bowed to the pressure of large crowds, but did not inform the minister of education, Alain Savary, of what he was doing. Poperen was indignant that socialist principles were being abandoned and was bewildered that his friend Savary leaned off the decision by listening to the radio.

Poperen believed in Europe but he was reluctant to accept the austerity and the abandonment of socialist measures. In 1986 he was removed as the party number two.

As Minister in Charge of Relations with Parliament, Poperen was relatively successful. But when Pierre Bérégovoy became Prime Minister in 1992 he did not keep Poperen in his govern-

ment. Although he considered this to be an injustice, he also saw it as the opportunity for him to save the Socialists. He stood down as deputy in 1993 and devoted his time to organising the recovery of socialism. He published his own bulletin, he wrote books and he made many speeches, all towards the end of recreating a new socialism.

What his attitude would have been in the elections of 1997 cannot be divined. Early in January he had a fall in his house from which he never recovered.

Douglas Johnson

Jean Maurice Poperen, politician: born Angers, Maine-et-Loire 9 January 1925; Minister in Charge of Relations with Parliament 1988-92; married 1960 Nathalie Valcourt; died Paris 24 August 1997.

BIRTHS

BACALUS: On 21 August 1997, to Andrew and Irene (née Rogerson), a son, Patrick Leon.

THORNTON: On 15 August, to Bente and James, a daughter, Elisabeth Marie, and sister to Katherine, in Oslo, Norway.

DEATHS

CARSTAIRS: Jean (née Dutton) on 19 August, at home, aged 73. Deeply loved mother, much missed by family and friends. Donations to Imperial Cancer Fund. Cremation at Maitland Crematorium, King's Lynn, Norfolk, on Tuesday 2 September at 4pm.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

FLOYD: On 25 August, in hospital, David, aged 83. A much-loved father, grandfather and great grandfather. Cremation service at Honor Oak Crematorium, Brockley Way, Forest Hill, London SE22, on Friday 29 August at 10am. No flowers, but donations to Parkinson's Disease Society, 22 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0RA.

VELLACOTT: Philip, at home, 23 August, aged 90. Funeral at Aberystwyth Crematorium, Monday 1 September at 3pm. The at the Richmond Hotel, The Promenade, Ayr. Family flowers only.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Marriages, Deaths, Memorials) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3DL, telephoned to 0171-233 2811 (24-hour answering machine 0171-233 2812) or faxed to 0171-233 2810, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

Birthdays

The Duke of Argyll, Keeper of the Great Seal of Scotland, 60; Mr Michael Arthur, diplomat, 47; Sir Kenneth Berrill, economist, 77; The Right Rev John Bone, former Bishop of Reading, 67; Sir Cecil Clothier QC, former chairman, Police Complaints Authority, 78; Miss Imogen Cooper, concert pianist, 48; Lord Cudlipp, former newspaper chairman, 84; Professor Wendy Davies, historian, 55; Mr Windsor Davies, actor, 67; Miss Janet Frame, novelist, 73; Mr Ben Gazzara, actor, 67; Sir Rupert Hart-Davis, author, ed-

itor and former publisher, 90; Sir Geoffrey Household, inventor of the EMI-scanner, 78; Mr Evelyn Hughes, footballer and broadcaster, 50; General Sir William Jackson, former Governor, Gibraltar, 80; Professor Sir John Kingman, Vice-Chancellor, Bristol University, 58; Dr Joseph Luns, former secretary-general of Nato, 86; Air Chief Marshal Sir Nigel Maynard, 76; Miss Elaine Melor, jockey, 54; Mr Donald O'Connor, actor and dancer, 72; Sir Christopher Pine, radiologist, 62; Mr Max Robertson, radio commentator and broadcaster, 82; Miss Emma Samma, actress, 37; Sir Thomas

Scrivenor, former colonial administrator, 85; Mr Julian Sheffield, chairman, Portals Group, 59; Mr John Shirley-Quirk, bass baritone, 66; Mr David Soul, actor, 53; Mr Ian Stewart MP, 47; Sir Peter Thornton, former senior civil servant, 80; Professor Roger Williams, hepatologist, 66.

Anniversaries

Births: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, poet, playwright and author, 1749; Thomas Seddon, painter, 1821; Liam O'Flaherty, novelist, 1896; Charles Boyer, actor, 1897; Deaths: St Augustine of Hippo, 430; Karl

Theodor Körner, poet, playwright and patriot, 1813; James Henry Leigh Hunt, critic and poet, 1859; Ernest Orlando Lawrence, physicist, 1958; Prince William of Gloucester, killed in an air crash 1972. On this day: the Scots routed the Royalist army at the Battle of Newburn, 1640; 200,000 black Americans demonstrated in Washington for civil rights, 1963. Today is the Feast Day of St Alexander of Constantinople, St Augustine of Hippo, St Edmund Arrowsmith, St Hermes of Rome, St John of Constantinople, St Julian of Brioude, St Moses of Abyssinia and St Paul IV of Constantinople.

Christopher Harley

The Thanksgiving Service for Christopher Harley will be held in Hereford Cathedral at 3pm on Friday 3 October.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Duke of York, President, attends the Festival of the Prince, Junior Golf Series at the Fife of Arden Golf Club, Warwickshire and opens the new Grampian Police Office at 179-dence, Aberdeen.

Changing of the Guard
The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

سكزا من الامل

Islands of uncertainty in need of a new status

Robin Cook does not much resemble Charles de Gaulle. But the Foreign Secretary has now set out to do something the French president accomplished a generation ago: dismantle an empire. Defeat in the battle for Algiers pushed the French to wrap up their African presence, then, with impeccable logic, to make the citizens of what remained of non-metropolitan France full citizens of France. The inhabitants of Guadeloupe and Martinique do not – like the inhabitants of Pitcairn or St Helena – have an indeterminate colonial relationship with the motherland; they belong to it, vote in its elections and possess its civic rights.

The volcanic eruptions on Montserrat are not to be compared with events in Algeria, of course, yet their outcome ought to be the same: a final reckoning for the age of empire. There is no point pretending that the process is going to be quick and surgical – the specific circumstances, populations and cultures of the dependent territories forbid that. There is no point in concealing that there are political pitfalls in resolving the status of Gibraltar or the Falklands. But Labour, provoked by events in the Caribbean, ought to be able to do what the Tories could not, through political cowardice – which is to recognise that this country cannot accomplish modernisation, cannot look the 21st century full in the face, without regularising the position

of this rag-bag of distant islands. Clare Short's deputy, George Foulkes, sets out for the West Indies at the weekend in what looks unmistakably like an exercise of stable-door closing. Volcanic eruptions permitting, the situation on the island of Montserrat is now settling down and – paradoxically – the island may now become a legitimate object of attention for the Department for International Development. A merit of the past week's event has been to involve the Foreign Office and No 10 – where eventually big decisions about the dependent territories will have to be taken.

What these events have exposed is Whitehall's myopia about those faraway islands and their lack of a "parent" or sponsor at court. It was a gap, to be sure, all too evident before the Falklands episode in 1982, and shines through the paragraphs of the Franks report on the circumstances leading up to the Argentine invasion. It must not happen again, so one necessary product of Mr Cook's review has to be the identification of a fixed Whitehall address for these islands.

They are not, of course, "foreign", just as the Channel Islands are not "British". The Foreign Office will need to stay in close contact with the Home Office and other departments, for example consulting the latter's archives. They will show, among other things, just how variable has been the status of the United Kingdom's close-to islands: Jersey,

Guernsey, Heligoland (British for a decade after the First World War), Rockall, St Kilda (once evacuated on official orders), and Man. Constitutional lawyers and Conservative MPs have been remarkably happy with the utterly anomalous position of Sark within these scepter'd isles; yet shouldn't a similar leeway be extended to the Turks and Caicos? We know from the public record how in the early Sixties ministers were prepared to give serious consideration to resolving problems with Malta by giving the Maltese a parliamentary vote and absorbing their islands into the United Kingdom – something

the then Maltese government was keen on. Is such a solution so outlandish, now, for St Helena?

The bureaucratic mind always seeks uniform solutions. Fascinating proposals have been made, in the past, for a new British Atlantic Territory status to include all the islands in, or in waters contiguous to, that ocean. But these turn out to be too different, too defined by their different histories. Mr Cook will need to play the tailor and devise plans for each. Take the Falklands. Political realists will say that years still have to pass before the disposition of the archipelago can sensibly be discussed, let

alone determined; political cynics will observe how political, let alone economic, development south of the Rio Grande still seems to defy all the trajectories and certain upwards movements prepared and predicted by Rand Institute Hegelians. Yet neither point absolves the Foreign Secretary from seeking to regularise the islands' status, let alone the political identity of their inhabitants.

Or Gibraltar, whose citizens possess British passports and sport GB stickers on their cars. Determining the rock's future is a test, to be sure, as much of the political maturity of Spain's political class, media and people as of British willingness to grasp a nettle. Here is a test, too, of the capacity of the European Union to engage with the hard world of power plays and national symbolism as opposed to that of butter mountains and money banks. Or Pitcairn – surely to be placed under the protection of Australia or New Zealand, like South Pacific territories before. Or Diego Garcia or Ascension (cede their sovereignties to the United States?).

As for Montserrat, the Caribbean has been hospitable enough to other tiny inhabited islands fashioning themselves, after colonialism, as statelets or *de facto* American dependencies. The process is rough and ready. It will, necessarily, involve balancing the inhabitants' declared wishes with the reality principle and British metropolitan interests.

There is no single superior principle (such as what islanders want) that has to prevail at all costs. A priority in British foreign policy has to be to accelerate the business of cutting the suit according to what cloth is available to a middle-ranking European power which lives by commerce and finance. Britain still spends far too much in maintaining a pretentious military and diplomatic profile. Resolving the future of the dependent territories is an essential part of this adjustment.

Be Fair Now, George

Following the lead of the Princess of Wales in speaking out in the French press, George Harrison has laid into the Gallagher brothers in an interview in *Le Figaro*. To express a view about the musical quality of Oasis – and, given the Gallaghers' ostentatious homages to the Fab Four, Harrison has every right to disclaim his would-be followers – is one thing, but to accuse the newcomers of excessive ego is a bit rich from someone who played with John Lennon. Still, where would the rock industry be without manufactured controversy – even if "Be Here Now" hardly needs the boost in sales the former Beatle is bound to have generated.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mines: first clear up the deadly legacy

Sir: The controversy caused by Diana, Princess of Wales's latest comments on the landmine ban, and the Foreign Secretary's response has heightened public awareness but may well have diverted attention from the central humanitarian concern.

An immediate global ban on the production and use of anti-personnel mines is certainly desirable, but even more urgent and more easily politically attainable is a concerted drive to remove the mines already laid. Unless the international community, presumably under UN auspices, sets up and finances an operational command to co-ordinate, direct and finance demining on a global scale, the incidence of tragic human casualties will only mount and rehabilitation of large areas of countries such as Angola, Mozambique, Bosnia and Cambodia will remain impossible for decades.

A variety of demining technologies exists and in a number of countries the military have developed the relevant skills to have personnel trained to meet their own specific needs, such as, by Britain, for the post-conflict clearance of the Falklands. South Africa, which announced a permanent ban in February, is already deploying its own human and technical resources for mine clearance in parts of southern Africa but needs the encouragement of international financial support to do this on a larger scale.

The question remains where the practical initiative is to come from. A worthwhile first step would be for Britain, in conjunction with South Africa, to put the matter on the agenda of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Edinburgh in October.
Professor WILLIAM F GUTTERIDGE
Director
Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism
London W1

Errant priests must face reality

Sir: The regime at Stroud for Catholic priests with personal problems described by an actively gay priest in the article "Behave or you'll be sent to Stroud" (27 August) seems very close to that freely chosen by many men and women who join a religious order or undertake a retreat.

Invasion or lack of privacy, restrictions on an atmosphere that may seem oppressive and claustrophobic are not necessarily bad things. Indeed, religious vows are voluntarily taken precisely with the intention of giving up some of one's freedoms for "the sake of the kingdom".

Catholic priests or religious who refuse to accept restrictions on their freedoms are being unrealistic. There is a growing number of Catholics who believe that their priests should not be obliged to sacrifice their God-given right to intimacy of the type that marriage offers, but until the rules are changed it does not seem unreasonable for superiors to try to make their errant clergy face reality.

It certainly seems the very minimum that should be demanded



of the small number of priests with a paedophile problem. Catholics should be grateful to the Servants of the Paraclete for providing this ministry in their name.
SIMON BRYDEN-BROOK
European Network Secretary
Church on the Move
London SW1

Cars promise a nightmare future

Sir: Mark McArthur-Christie is mistaken to claim that a 50 per cent growth in car numbers is impossible because 80 per cent of those eligible to drive already possess driving licences (Letters, 22 August). Such a simplistic argument fails to recognise the large number of licence holders who, like myself, do not own a car. It also ignores the fact that people are now tending to possess their cars well beyond retirement age.

Comparison with other countries shows the potential for further dramatic growth in car ownership. The UK has only 350 cars per 1,000 population, compared with almost 600 in the United States, over 500 in Italy, and nearly 500 in Germany.

The claim that teleworking can significantly reduce road traffic volumes is unproven – his prediction of 3 million teleworkers by 2000 seems a little optimistic. There are concerns that working from home could increase demand for living outside cities in locations where there is often little alternative to relying on the private car.

The view that measures must be taken to discourage car use and promote alternatives, such as

walking, cycling and public transport, is shared across the political spectrum. The Government's Transport White Paper consultation document recognises that "we cannot carry on as at present", and the former transport minister, Steven Norris, said last week: "People think they have a civil right to drive where they want; that is a civil right which has expired."

Without government action, the freedom to drive will simply be restricted by worsening congestion, with disastrous implications for the environment and the economy. This vision of the future does not bear contemplation.
Councillor DAVID BEGG
Convener of Transportation Committee
The City of Edinburgh Council

Sir: A compelling case for lower speed limits has been set out by Dr Mayer Hillman and Stephen Plowden in *Speed Control and Transport Policy* (Policy Studies Institute, 1996).

Raising the costs of car ownership and use will simply discriminate against the less well-off and will have little impact on the wealthy and business users, who will find the road space available to them increases as the poor are priced off the road. Those who can continue to afford to drive as and when they want to will continue to drive at wasteful and dangerous speeds in overweight and overpowered cars. Speed control is absolutely equitable and brings with it many environmental

benefits including fuel economy, reduced emissions and noise pollution and the saving of life and limb. Speed control over private cars also gives public forms of transport a vital advantage.
Sweden and Norway already have lower limits which are strictly enforced.
RONALD SHARP
Green Speed
Abingdon, Oxfordshire

A way out of the Cyprus impasse

Sir: The recent UN-sponsored talks in New York and Switzerland between the leaders of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities in Cyprus have broken down. They hardly got started, because of a fundamental and persistent disagreement over the issue of sovereignty in the new bi-communal, bi-zonal federal state that is the object of the negotiations.

The Greek Cypriots want the Turkish Cypriots to recognise that the federation will have one undivided sovereignty over one people and one territory. The new federal state is to be a modification of the bi-communal state established in 1960, the Republic of Cyprus, a state from which the Turkish Cypriots were excluded in 1964-65 unless they agreed to changes which would have turned them into a minority and which offended against the Constitution, which was

"guaranteed" (ineffectively) by Britain, Greece and Turkey. International recognition of the purely Greek Cypriot administration as the government of Cyprus has been, and still is, deeply resented by the Turkish Cypriots and Turkey.

Consequently, the Turkish Cypriots, not trusting the Greek Cypriots, insist upon being treated as absolute equals in negotiations for a federation. In their view, in the final analysis, sovereignty rests in the two states which decide to create the federation. In other words they support the view that "sovereignty emanates equally from the two communities". The UN Secretary General tried this formulation in New York, but, it appears, in response to Greek Cypriot protests, has now abandoned it. The Turkish Cypriot response is to demand recognition of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus as a prelude to negotiations – a demand the UN will not accept.

The concept of sovereignty is bedevilling the issue. Both sides should be persuaded to drop it. In a federation sovereignty is, in fact, divided since some powers are accorded to the federal arm of government and some to the governments of the constituent states. Since the structure is functional, sovereignty over territory is irrelevant; some (the federal) functions are carried out throughout the territory, but many functions are just state-wide. Also there is no need to stress one citizenship; citizens relate to both

levels of authority. Still less is there any need to mention the Cypriot people, or nation. Federations are not necessarily nation states – usually not, in fact.

The UN is still trying to reconcile theoretically irreconcilable positions. As in 1992, it has proved to be futile.
Professor CLEMENT DODD
Hemlingford Grey, Cambridgeshire

Asylum injustice

Sir: Michael Bartlett (letter, 27 August) is quite right about the detention of asylum-seekers. Detention by executive action without public hearing, without cause shown and without hearing both sides, infringes the very principle of the rule of law.

Liberal Democrats are committed to having all such detentions reviewed by a judge to discover whether they are, in fact, undertaken with good cause. This would not merely uphold law and liberty, it would even save millions of pounds of public money.
Earl RUSSELL
Liberal Democrat Social Security Spokesman
House of Lords
London SW7

Exam question

Sir: You report (25 August) that Trinity College, Cambridge has seen an increase in the number of first-class degrees, from 26 per cent to 34.1 per cent. May I ask on behalf of my GCSE students whether this represents a decline in the standard of the examinations set?
Dr W A PENNY
Whitley Bay, North Yorkshire

Miserable myth of happy families

Sir: I was struck although not shocked by the photographs of a "family at war" (25 August). These photographs are simply a graphic representation of the emotional chaos which happens in many families.

Hostility, fear, dislike and manipulation – with occasional warmth – are what many people experience in the bosom of their families. Often, however, it is not expressed physically but rather through intense and unrelenting psychological pressure. Far less is it admitted. I, and several of my valued friends, have "outed" the terrible truth that we do not come from families whose members are supportive and happy.

It is arguable that the rhetoric of the supportive family unit has distorted the thinking behind many social programmes and a great deal of social research. It has also contributed in large part to the sense of isolation that those of us who are not part of a mutually supportive "blood-is-thicker-than-water" social group feel.

That is until you realise that many, many others are in the same position, and admitting it is a great relief. What warmth I feel towards Jessica Mitford: in response to Nancy Mitford's view that "Sisters stand between one and life's cruel circumstances", she responded that surely sisters were life's cruel circumstances.

Dr MARGARET MITCHELL
Department of Psychology
Glasgow Caledonian University

Issues of write and wrong

Sir: Your report on the wayward grammar of school inspectors (19 August) faults them for subject-verb agreement, citing the solecism "attainment and progress is good". But there is nothing wrong with putting a singular verb after plural subjects, if those subjects can be taken as a single idea – you would not say, for instance, "Tarring and feathering are too good a punishment for him."

As for the fuss about the apostrophe, why don't we just get rid of it? Like the French circumflex, it is merely decorative; after all, we manage perfectly well without it in speech.

And when are you guys going to give up your struggle against the "split infinitive"? There is, strictly speaking, no infinitive in English (merely a construct of "to" plus verb) and therefore nothing to be split. But I must say I'm fun to watch y'all prezingling your prose to come up with such gems as "a detailed discussion of how safely to explore their sexuality".
PETER BRODIE
Palo Alto
California
USA

Blair's boar

Sir: I read with interest the press reports of the Prime Minister's holiday eating. Local wild boar in a white wine sauce, home-made pasta with a wild hare sauce and rabbit in a wine sauce were enjoyed.

I thought Mr Blair was against sporting pursuits and not a fan of the countryside rally. What don't I understand? Will these culinary delights be available only to the overseas traveller in years to come?
PAUL M COOPER
Pickering
North Yorkshire

analysis

Intensive farming has made food in the US cheap and plentiful. But, says Mary Dejevsky, Americans are beginning to realise that their diet may also be bland and dangerous



Toss another T-bone on the barbecue: Americans have taken for granted that everyone can get affordable groceries. Photograph: Golf Picture Library

America's beef about food safety

There was a time, not so long ago, when Americans had a simple life – to Europeans – somewhat naïve, attitude to the food they ate. If the government said it was safe, then it was. That confidence was grounded, first, in the touching belief that the government had the best interests of Americans at heart, and second, in the plethora of rules, regulations and labelling requirements that govern food production and sales in the US.

It was further reinforced by the near-certainty that the food in the supermarket, with few and clearly displayed exceptions, was all-American, produced in the US by Americans, for Americans. Thanks to their innate optimism and their faith in the benefits of scientific advance, Americans also had few qualms about intensive methods in agriculture, or the swift application of technical advances.

The interests of farmers in economics of method and scale, the interests of the food industry in efficiency and profit, and the interests of consumers in cheap and plentiful food, all seemed to come together in a symphony of affordable abundance that is still the envy of the world. Whether you want a restaurant meal of steak and salad, a T-bone for the home barbecue or a hamburger and fries from the local takeaway, the national consensus is that it should be accessible to all – and, mostly, it is.

This admirable picture, however, has another side which is reflected in the shortcomings that have come to light during the investigation into the recent outbreak of *E. coli* food poisoning in Colorado.

The United States is a huge market, and vast food processing conglomerates have grown up to supply it. Dubious practices at one plant – in this case a meat plant in the cattle country of Nebraska belonging to an Arkansas-based firm Hudson Foods Inc – can affect wholesale and retail customers across America. The hamburgers produced by Hudson Foods made their way into 28 states, two of the country's biggest supermarket chains – Wal-Mart and Safeway – and most of the Burger King restaurants in the Midwest (which were suddenly unable to supply any burgers at all, when the suspect meat had been recalled).

The reams of regulation invite different interpretations and corner-cutting which may negate the hyper-hygiene dictated by law, however dutifully observed. It is no good having automatic toilet-flushing and requiring staff to wear caps and gloves and cover all hair and beards (as at Hudson), if even a small portion of one batch of what turns out to be contaminated meat is held over and added to an unspecified part of the next day's production. At Hudson, this practice made it impossible to trace where the bacteria might be found, which is why the plant was summarily closed.

Public insouciance about the application of technology has led to the acceptance (or ignorance) of developments that may be insufficiently tested or regulated. The use of hormone additives in beef cattle, for example, is now widespread and there is no requirement on the farmer, abattoir, processor or shop to label the meat accordingly. The beef farmers who use the hormones say that they enable the cows to reach slaughter weight more rapidly, so cutting costs; that the additive is a naturally occurring

hormone (and thus harmless); and that no "residue" remains in the beast at slaughter. Extensive scientific testing, they say, also shows that the procedure is harmless. The World Trade Organisation now appears to accept these arguments and last week decreed that the EU's ban on beef bred with hormone additives is unwarranted.

Exactly what proportion of fruit and vegetables on sale in US supermarkets has been genetically modified is not recorded – a supermarket chain that tried to find out received replies from only 20 per cent of suppliers. The modifications are designed not just to make the product require less water, or resist particular ailments or insects, but to make it sweeter, rounder, more or less juicy or a more attractive colour. There was never any public debate about the pros and cons of this, such as is starting up in Europe (some scientists believe it can increase allergic reactions); there is no special labelling; it simply happens.

To a European living in the United States, one of the results is a plentiful supply of relatively inexpensive food, which none the less often lacks quality and taste. The water content of even fresh food seems very high compared to that of food bought from European supermarkets, and as for the taste – well, bland would be the kindest qualifier.

The size of the US food industry, moreover, makes it one of the biggest interest groups in the country, both as a whole and by sector. Challenging farming or producer practices brings down the wrath of some very powerful lobbies on the hapless questioner. It is even an offence in 13 states to

"disparage" food quality; legislation was introduced after one of the periodic (and often exaggerated) cancer scares implicated Alar, a substance used to make apples look shinier – and caused the apple market to crash. The same law is currently being used in Texas against the television celebrity Oprah Winfrey, and a scientist who appeared on her programme to question whether the US was really free of BSE (mad cow disease) and caused losses to Texas stock breeders.

Nor is it true to say that quality and safety monitoring arrangements in the United States are as foolproof as is often believed. Yes, there are separate authorities overseeing agriculture (the Department of Agriculture) and food (the Food and Drug Administration) – the model that the new British government says it will adopt. But the US structure is in fact more complicated, and the separation of producer and consumer interests less clear-cut, than appears. Meat, poultry and egg production are all overseen by the Agriculture Department; they are not the province of the FDA, while seafood and other food products are. The powers of the Agriculture Department, moreover, are limited. It cannot recall produce or close plants without the agreement of the company concerned.

The fact that all this is emerging into the public domain suggests that a new, more questioning mood is emerging in the United States where food safety is concerned. The administration's reaction – to some critics it is a huge over-reaction – to the fewer than 20 reported cases of *E. coli* poisoning in Colorado, and the record speed with which the food recall was announced,

indicate an awareness at the highest political level that public confidence in food, and its quality and safety, can no longer be taken for granted.

This is by no means the first food scare this year. An earlier outbreak of poisoning was traced to the cyclospora parasite in a basil sauce supplied by a gourmet delicatessen chain. Raspberries also contaminated by cyclospora caused 1,000 people to fall sick. Annually, food poisoning is thought to claim around 9,000 lives in the US, and reported cases are increasing.

In previous outbreaks, including the raspberries, there was an automatic – and ignoble – tendency to blame foreign imports, especially from Mexico and other Central American countries. (The raspberries came from Guatemala.) Food imports, which have doubled in quantity in five years, are a relative novelty, and attract suspicion and prejudice. What the two latest outbreaks had in common, however, was that – despite extraordinary efforts in the basil case to prove the contrary – both outbreaks were "home grown".

The increase in food imports (facilitated by the three-year-old North American Free Trade Agreement) and the perception of an increase in food poisoning outbreaks have undoubtedly contributed to a sense that food is less safe than it was. But there were signs of a more questioning public attitude well before this summer. The evidence – in America's cities, if not yet in the heartland – is everywhere. The small health-food shops that set up on the West Coast and in urban areas of the East during the Eighties have spawned several big supermarket chains that cater specifically to the demand for

organically produced food, with no additives.

The Fresh Fields chain, which originated in 1991 in Maryland and merged with the Texas-based Whole Foods company in 1996, is just one of a flourishing genre that profits from the fears of middle-class Americans about the harm that poor quality and junk food may inflict on them and their children. This year, mainstream supermarkets such as Safeway and Giant have followed the trend, buying in, advertising and labelling not just organic, but also locally grown produce.

Over roughly the same five-year period, the number of farmers' markets held at least weekly in many US towns and cities has increased dramatically. The first farmers' market to be held in central Washington DC – a city that often lags behind East Coast urban trends – was set up earlier this summer. It is held on Sunday mornings in a bank car park on the edge of Dupont Circle, a fashionable city district populated mainly by young professionals.

This food is, as a rule, considerably more expensive than standard American supermarket fare. Those who can afford it, however, are now prepared to pay for what they perceive to be better quality. Consumers seem to be shifting away from the decade-old desire for slenderness and fitness at all costs (the no-fat, no-cholesterol preoccupations that still dominate mainstream supermarkets) towards a preference for food that is itself pure and healthy.

This shift, if it continues, could have implications that go far beyond the supermarket and extend into America's international relations. Some of the most acrimonious disputes

in the Western world pit the US and the European Union against each other on the matter of food: its quality, safety and labelling. A few of the regulatory problems were resolved earlier this summer. But there remains a seemingly unbridgeable gulf – caused as much by cultural attitudes as by scientific evidence – on the question of altered foods: beef produced with hormone additives and genetic modification of fruit and vegetables. The US Agriculture Secretary, Dan Glickman, went so far as to say recently that this difference was shaping up to be the "battle royal of 21st-century world agriculture".

The EU is demanding, at very least, that US produce which has been altered should be labelled as such. France, with a large domestic market to protect, and ultra-demanding and traditionally-minded consumers, is in the forefront of the objections. The Americans say this is discrimination, and accuse the Europeans of using spurious scientific arguments to keep cheaper US produce out. The Europeans retort that the Americans use their labyrinthine regulations for the same purpose.

Until recently, the American public would have sided unquestioningly with the US government in this argument. The revelations that have followed the recent *E. coli* poisoning outbreak, however, and the growing movement in the United States for healthy, natural and, if necessary, more expensive food, suggest that American consumers are starting to raise questions similar to the ones that worry European consumers. If that is so, the gap between the US and the EU on food exports may begin to narrow by itself.

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Those Greyhound conversations run on and on

The first thing I heard when I got back from North America earlier this month and pulled out of Heathrow in the cold dawn light was the sound of Kerry Shale on Radio 4 telling us yet again what Bill Bryson thought of Britain in *Notes from a Small Island*.

Now, I am usually happy to hear what Bill Bryson thinks of the place (especially when Kerry Shale reads it – if I were a rich man I would pay Kerry Shale to come round to my house and read books to me) but this time there was something that stuck in my craw. Bryson was telling us never to talk to people on trains. People on trains are boring, he said. They talk about trains. And engines. There was, for example, this man who had approached him on a British train while he was reading a Paul Theroux book and had proceeded to lambast Theroux's lack of interest in railway engines. "How can you travel from Lahore to Islamabad by train without mentioning the engine's number?" the man had cried. All people on trains are like this, said Bryson. Avoid them ...

This was so patently untrue that I stirred in my jet-lagged sleep and cried out in protest, which was just as well, as when I awoke I turned out to be driving home down the M4. But recently I have met the most interesting people imaginable on trains, all very forthcoming, often funny and invariably quirky, and I do not regret having talked to any of them. Not on American trains, of course. They hardly have any trains left in America. In America you either fly at great expense and inconvenience, or you are forced to go by bus.

My wife and I were recently forced to go by bus on the simple three-hour journey from Burlington, Vermont (a most underrated little town), to Montreal (which I suspect may be overrated, but we weren't there long) because there was no other way of making the journey. There was no air link. The Amtrak train link had been withdrawn. You can't hire a car in the USA and leave it in Canada. So it had to be the dear old Greyhound bus.

"Buy a bottle of cheap wine for the journey,"



Miles Kington

chucked an American friend when he heard we were mixing with lowly American bus passengers. He would have been surprised to learn that the young guy I sat next to was a post-graduate plant geneticist going to a big conference in Montreal. He had come from Bloomington, Indiana, a long way away.

"Bloomington?" I mused. "That's where Hoagy Carmichael came from."

"Funny you should say that," he replied. "but in the building where I work there is actually a Hoagy Carmichael room."

It was clear from the surprised way he said this that he hadn't the faintest idea who Hoagy was.

"You from England?" he asked. "You probably guessed it from my cute accent," I said. He laughed. "Well, we have two guys from Britain working in our lab. One from London, one from Northern Ireland."

"No political problems, I hope?"

He said nothing. He clearly wasn't aware why there should be, so I changed the subject.

"Plant genetics, eh?" I said. "What's your speciality?"

"Sunflowers," he said. "In fact, I have to do a short paper on it at Montreal. I've been given 12 minutes. I've never given a talk at a conference before. I'm rather nervous."

"Practise on me," I invited him.

"Well," he said, "there are three basic species of sunflower growing wild in America. Two have quite distinct sets of DNA, but the genome of the third shows characteristics of both the others."

"Therefore it is a hybrid. But nobody has the faintest idea how long the hybridisation process has taken – how long, that is, it took for the third to evolve from the other two. So we decided to use a combination of some computer simulation and some experiments in the field."

He explained at some length. We arrived at the American-Canadian border. We all filed out and had our luggage searched. We were seriously questioned. Two people were not allowed to get back on the coach. One of them had a DWI (Driving While Intoxicated) conviction on his papers, which may have had something to do with it. We got back on ...

"This suggested that the hybridisation process did in fact take place faster than anyone had realised ..."

He finally came to a halt. "That was twenty-five minutes in toto," I said, looking at my watch. "You've got to cut it by half."

Dear Bill Bryson, people on coaches talking about sunflowers can be just as bad as people on trains talking about engines.

صكزا من الاميل

by Simon Davies

ther?

business & city

FINANCIAL JOURNAL
OF THE YEAR

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BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

WH Smith chief rules out early break-up plans

Nigel Cope
City Correspondent

WH Smith's chairman, Jeremy Hardie, ruled out a break-up of the struggling retail group yesterday, saying the appointment of a new chief executive remained the priority. Speaking as WH Smith announced a rebound in full-year underlying profits to £124m, Mr Hardie said the company would stick to the strategy developed by Bill Cockburn, whose shock decision to quit as chief executive in June plunged the group into fresh turmoil.

"We have no plans for a break-up," he said. "A year ago we had a strategic review and disposed of some assets such as Do It All and business supplies. The strategy we developed then is being implemented now. What you don't do is thrash about changing things."

Mr Hardie admitted that he could not dismiss a break-up entirely as the incoming chief executive may view the situation differently. However, he said none of the candidates interviewed for the post had expressed a different view as to the company's best method of rebuilding shareholder value.

Mr Hardie, who has been spending all his time at the company even though he is supposed to be part-time chairman, disappointed the City by giving precious little fresh information about the chief executive search. "It is only two months since Bill Cockburn left and if you are going to do a professional job it takes longer than that. You don't find a chief executive by looking at the small ads overnight," he said. The interviews had been completed but did not rule out additional candidates coming forward.



Hardie: "You don't find a CEO by looking at the small ads"

At present the leading external candidate is Stuart Rose, the former Burton director. The three internal candidates are Alan Giles, John Hancock, and Richard Handover. Keith Hamill, the group's finance director who was considered a front-runner prior to his decision to pull out at the weekend, said he was happy to work under someone else and had no plans to quit. "I'm quite happy here. I'm not roving about talking to headhunters."

He denied he had canvassed support for a break-up but admitted that he had been "quite loud" about the company being under-valued when the shares fell to 350p. Some analysts say the group could be worth more than its current market value of just over £1bn if parts of the group such as the Waterstones books division and Virgin Our Price, were sold.

Mr Cockburn, who joins BT

as head of its UK operations in October, will not return to Smith's after taking August as holiday. However, he telephoned the company yesterday saying he would waive his September salary, worth around £35,000.

WH Smith's pre-tax profits of £124m for the year to 31 May followed the previous year's £194m loss, which was struck after heavy exceptional items.

However, there were fresh problems in the main WH Smith retail business, where the group was forced to make a £6m provision for £20m of excess stock. The company said the unsold books, music and videos were a result of over-buying and a failure to mark poor sellers down soon enough.

Mr Hardie said he was confident that the business could be turned around. "There is a big market for a mainstream store providing music, books and so on, regardless of the inroads the specialist retailers and supermarkets are making." There was also a £73m pension write-off caused by the recent changes to Advance Corporation Tax in the Budget. Like-for-like sales at the core business rose by just 1.5 per cent last year and by 2 per cent in current trading.

In the rest of the business, Waterstones remained the star performer, increasing profits from £15m to £20m. But profits at Virgin Our Price fell from £18m to £14m due to a weak roster of music releases.

Group sales were up 4 per cent at £2.75bn and the dividend was maintained at 15.65p. The shares closed 9p higher at 376.5p.

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Vote of confidence: The latest land sale in Hong Kong allayed fears that prices might fall sharply in the wake of the handover to China

Stephen Vines
Hong Kong

The Hong Kong stock market breathed a sigh of collective relief yesterday when the first government land auction since the return to Chinese rule produced bids well to the high end of expectations.

Investors had been anticipating the outcome as a signal of developers' confidence in property, which in turn underpins the stock market as a whole. Most attention was focused on a 10,570 square metre residential development site in the up-market Repulse Bay district which was sold for HK\$5.5bn (£441m). This works out at about £1,290 per square foot.

The lowest estimate for the sale was HK\$4.1bn, while the highest was around HK\$6bn. As the overheated luxury

Buoyant land prices take pressure off Hang Seng

end of the residential property market has seen prices fall by as much as 30 per cent in recent months, yesterday's auction delivered a clear signal that the big-league developers were not losing faith.

After a slow start to the hour-long bidding, two big companies were left in the contest. Eventually Chinaem pulled through, outbidding Cheung Kong, the flagship of the group controlled by Li Ka-shing, who is Hong Kong's most astute property developer. Mr Li's son, Victor, who bid on behalf of the company, described the

result as "a vote of confidence" in the Hong Kong market.

Misgivings about the auction earlier in the day prompted investors to place a heavy volume of sell orders, taking the market down 157 points at the morning close. However, as news of the auction seeped out, buyers rushed back, leaving the blue-chip Hang Seng Index to close at 15,534 points, a fall of just 13 points on the day. James Osborn, director of sales at ING Barings Securities, said the real importance of the auction was that it contained "no nasty shocks". He said the

market would have been seriously shaken if bidding had been below expectations but as the three sites on offer had been sold for good prices, the market could breathe easy.

Although there was some evidence of renewed interest in blue chips yesterday, the Hong Kong market has spent most of the past month standing on its head. Retail and mainland Chinese investors have pushed big institutional investors to the side and poured unprecedented sums of money into the market. These punters have shunned blue chips and headed straight

for smaller companies, focusing on those with Chinese connections.

As a result, the constituent stocks of the Hang Seng Index have seen their share of trades fall from about 60 per cent of market volume 12 months ago to less than 20 per cent over the past month.

On Tuesday the trade in blue chips slumped to a new low, representing less than 10 per cent of the market volume.

The effect of this new pattern of trading is to make the notoriously volatile Hong Kong market even more volatile as small punters move rapidly in and out of stocks. Institutional buyers have been scared away by some of the crazy valuations now prevailing in the market and are sticking mainly with blue chips which are beginning to look increasingly cheap compared to the rest of the market.

United may axe 100 jobs in TV revamp

Cathy Newman

United News & Media's takeover of HTV has triggered a review of all Lord Hollick's broadcasting interests, which could lead to around 100 job losses.

In the wake of the £372m acquisition of HTV in June, United has kicked off a cost-cutting drive across the group's television portfolio, which also includes the Anglia and Meridian franchises.

A spokesman for United Broadcasting confirmed the review, but said it was hard to see how many jobs would go at this stage.

However, a source at the company said the group was looking to make 100 people redundant to make savings of £3m. City analysts said yesterday that United had found HTV was "a tight ship", and had decided to seek cost savings elsewhere in the group. One said: "Costs will be cut more from United's existing television operations than HTV."

Another analyst said that, far from slashing large numbers of jobs from HTV, United would actually use the organisation of HTV as a template for its other franchises. He said: "United is discovering that maybe it will have to adopt the measures HTV had in place in its existing television operations."

United reports its interim results next month, but it is not expected to have finalised the review by then. An announcement about the streamlining is likely to be made in the next two months.

United paid a full price for HTV in order to ensure it maintained its position as one of the biggest players in ITV, along with Carlton Communications and Granada Group. Whereas most recent bids valued television companies at around 30 times earnings, United's 420p-a-share agreed bid was equivalent to around 40 times earnings. Granada, which bought Yorkshire-Tyne Tees Television earlier in the summer, paid £11.75 a share, valuing the company at £711m, or just over 30 times earnings.

At the time of the deal, United said it could save around £10m by amalgamating programme transmission for HTV, Meridian and Anglia. However, job losses were originally expected to be minimal, and Meridian and Anglia had hoped to escape unscathed.

Apart from a 29 per cent stake in the newly launched terrestrial television station, Channel 5, Lord Hollick's group also owns numerous press interests, including the Express newspapers and Miller Freeman, publisher of business magazines.

Gas suppliers refuse to back watchdog

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

The high-profile watchdog set up to outlaw dubious sales tactics in the emerging domestic gas and electricity markets was facing a boycott yesterday by some of the leading independent suppliers.

Two of the biggest gas companies competing with British Gas, Eastern Natural Gas and Calorix, have refused to join the Association of Energy Suppliers (AES) after reservations about its effectiveness. The association was launched this summer by the Gas Consumers Council (GCC) and Electricity Association after

complaints about door-to-door sales tactics in trials of household gas competition.

The dispute emerged as Clare Spottiswoode, the gas industry regulator, yesterday confirmed that the next phase of gas competition, extending choice to 2 million homes in Scotland and the North-east of England, would start on 1 November.

The decision is likely to prove controversial after demands from several independent gas companies that the trial be postponed to February. They claimed computer systems being built by TransCo, the pipeline network run by BG, would not be fully tested.

Ms Spottiswoode said TransCo's innovative approach to its data management systems had made the early launch date possible in time for the highest-spending winter quarter.

Sue Slipman, director of the GCC, yesterday joined the criticism of the November launch. She said: "We are worried that the early opening of the market will lead to higher levels of problems for consumers than would have been created by a later starting date. GCC does not have the resources to support a high level of consumer complaints."

The looming boycott of the AES is expected to lead to

pressure for a fully fledged statutory sales code for the energy industry, despite Ms Spottiswoode's reluctance to incorporate a mandatory code into companies' operating licences.

The AES had expected all gas and electricity suppliers to join its ranks, with sanctions including public dismissal from the body after three warnings.

Eastern, the gas arm of Energy Group, said its membership was under review and it had no plans to join. A spokesman said: "We're confident the interests of our customers are already protected. We already have our own code

of practice which is tougher than the AES's."

The company was at the centre of complaints about its sales tactics since the start of competition, resulting in the sacking of some sales representatives and a rebuke from Ofgas, the industry watchdog. Eastern said its own code had a 14-day cooling-off period for customers, double the seven-day period for the AES.

Calorix, which has campaigned for a statutory code of conduct, was also unhappy. "We haven't signed yet and we have concerns about the effectiveness of the sanctions," said a spokeswoman.



Clare Spottiswoode: Under fire over November launch

Exports defy strong sterling

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

The strong pound is showing no signs of triggering the widely predicted plunge in exports, according to new figures for Britain's trade deficit.

The gap between exports and imports widened slightly to £950m in June from £733m in May, according to figures from the Office for National Statistics. But rising imports rather than falling overseas sales explained the deterioration.

The trade shortfall with non-EU countries alone fell sharply from £713m in June to only £65m in July. This was thanks mainly to one-offs such as the shipment of a £400m drilling

platform from Tyne-side across the North Sea to Norway.

Even excluding such items, the figures defied warnings of a nosedive in exports made by industrialists and many economists. The overall deficit shrunk in underlying terms from £1.1bn in May to £974m in June.

"If you take out the erratic trade balance is probably widening, but the cause is higher imports rather than lower exports," said Dharshini David, an economist at HSBC Markets. "It suggests that windfall spending is sucking in imports."

Excluding both oil and erratic items, the underlying volume of imports from the rest of the world rose by 3.8 per cent in the three months to June, their

growth picking up from near zero. However, underlying growth in export volumes has remained robust, picking up from 2.7 per cent in May to 5 per cent in June. Growth in volumes shipped to non-EU markets was 4.4 per cent in the three months to July.

Many analysts continue to expect the impact of the strong pound will be reflected in the official figures before long.

"Business surveys have shown a massive deterioration in export orders," said Michael Saunders of Salomon Brothers. The surveys typically predicted the path of actual exports by one or two quarters, he said.

Some economists are becoming less convinced that the

widely expected plunge will materialise, however. Adam Cole at James Capel pointed out that normally the impact of sterling's appreciation on export volumes should have been at its height about now.

"Exporters have been able to take the impact on their profit margins because they had sustained virtually all of the improvement in competitiveness brought about by the devaluation in 1992," he said. "The impact of the higher pound on export volumes and output could turn out to be very muted."

The pound reacted little to yesterday's figures. Its index against a range of currencies ended up 0.3 at 101.9.

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Fidelity to close 'cumbersome' Magellan fund

Tom Stevenson
Financial Editor

Boston-based Fidelity is to close its huge Magellan investment fund to new investors from the end of September in an effort to make it more manageable. Magellan, which is Fidelity's flagship mutual fund and the biggest of its kind in the world, is now worth almost \$63bn (£39bn).

The closure of the fund to new investors follows an improvement in the fund's fortunes after a period of under-performance. Fidelity said an expected inflow of cash following the improved investment performance had prompted the decision to close the fund.

Fidelity said existing investors would be allowed to continue topping up their holdings after 30 September but no new investors would be allowed in. Participants in most group retirement plans, where Magellan is an existing investment option, would also be able to continue investing.

Robert Pozen, head of Fidelity's \$500bn mutual fund group, said of the decision: "By reducing future access to the fund, its assets will grow at reasonable levels." He said the move would allow the fund's manager, Bob Stansky, "to con-

tinue to manage the fund in the most effective manner for its shareholders."

The move is unusual for a mutual fund manager, which usually likes to keep funds open to maximise their fee income. However, Fidelity has been under pressure to close the fund because, analysts claimed, its cumbersome size was damaging shareholders' returns.

Eric Kobren, editor of *Fidelity Insight*, an independent newsletter that tracks the investment group, said: "It's in the best interest of shareholders to close Magellan. The fund is just too large."

Fidelity's Magellan is the biggest investment fund by far. Its closest rival, Vanguard Group's Index 500 Portfolio, has about \$45bn in assets. Fidelity has said in the past it would close Magellan if the company determined that such a move would be in the best interests of shareholders.

The closure of Magellan comes after record inflows of cash for the first time in 18 months during which poor performance has led to almost \$10bn being withdrawn. The inflow follows an improvement in performance since Mr Stansky took over control of the fund from Jeff Vinik in June 1996.

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STOCK MARKETS					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low
FTSE 100	4906.90	+20.80	+0.4	5086.80	4056.60
FTSE 250	4549.60	+40.40	+0.9	4729.40	4386.20
FTSE 350	2367.20	+8.00	+0.3	2436.00	2017.90
FTSE SmallCap	2252.75	+37.00	+1.7	2374.20	2178.29
FTSE All-Share	2213.32	+7.28	+0.3	2376.39	1989.78
FTSE AIM-Share	7729.03	+53.19	+0.7	8259.31	5032.94
New York	18441.94	+373.04	+2.0	20691.07	17303.85
Tokyo	15633.95	+13.27	+0.1	15673.27	12056.17
Hong Kong	3995.66	+36.33	+0.9	4436.93	2848.77
Frankfurt	3995.66	+36.33	+0.9	4436.93	2848.77

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES					
Instrument	Rate	1 Year	3 Year	5 Year	10 Year
UK short sterling	7.125	7.50	7.10	7.20	8.03
UK medium gilt	5.55	5.97	5.30	5.78	6.54
US long bond	5.53	5.95	5.30	5.78	6.54
Germany	3.18	3.823	5.71	6.38	6.40

CURRENCIES					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low
£/\$	1.8113	-0.146	-1.557	1.8113	1.557
£/¥	1.8145	+0.282	1.556	1.8145	1.556
DM/\$	2.8170	+1.349	2.2987	2.8170	1.477
¥/£	1.1045	+0.098	0.898	1.1045	0.898
DM/£	1.1895	+0.0325	0.273	1.1895	0.273
\$/£	101.9	+0.3	0.3	101.9	0.3

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Waiving his salary is the least Cockburn can do

COMMENT

It is becoming increasingly clear just how big a mess he has left poor old Smith's in. It was obvious from the outset that his abrupt departure after just 18 months at the helm would cause great disruption. But the fall-out will probably be greater than was originally imagined.

How considerate of Bill Cockburn to telephone WH Smith yesterday and tell his former employer he was prepared to waive his September salary of £35,000. What a fine and magnanimous gesture from a man who has comprehensively legged over the organisation for which he used to work. Not feeling guilty by any chance is he?

He certainly ought to. For a start, Mr Cockburn will not actually be doing any work for WH Smith in September. He has already left and will be enjoying a spot of gardening leave prior to throwing in his lot with BT. Second, it is becoming increasingly clear just how big a mess he has left poor old Smith's in. It was obvious from the outset that his abrupt departure after just 18 months at the helm would cause great disruption in an already fragile business. But the fall-out will probably be greater – certainly at board level – than was originally imagined.

Iake Keith Hammill, for instance. The former Fortis finance director, who was one of Mr Cockburn's first appointments, was an early runner for the top job but has now ruled himself out saying it should go to a retailer rather than a numbers man. He was putting a brave face on it yesterday, saying he was happy to stay on. But it is more likely that he will be off within six months to the next decent job offer that comes his way.

The exodus will probably not stop there. If the job goes to an outsider, the new boss will want to bring in his own team, which

means ousting some of the incumbents. If it goes to one of the internal candidates, it is more than likely that one or two of those passed over will seek pastures new.

What all this adds up to is that a business that has already lost 10 directors since the group's calamitous profits warning two years ago, will lose yet more. Jeremy Hardie, WH Smith's chairman, is going to start feeling like a recruitment consultant soon.

He certainly has his work cut out. As the latest results show, this grand old name of the high street still has a long way to go before it even enters the recovery phase, let alone starts to come out of it. Weak sales growth is an old problem, but £20m of unsold books, records and videos was a new one thrown in for good measure. Whoever gets Bill Cockburn's job will soon see why he left it in such a hurry.

Conflicting signals on interest rates

A short-term interest rates high enough to head off an inflationary boom? The Bank of England has indicated that there will be a pause for reflection before anything further is done. Its newly formed Monetary Policy Committee will not, however, have drawn much comfort from the latest raft of economic statistics. There were further signs of the windfall-driven spending spree in the trade figures yesterday. Combine that

with the record level of August car sales, reported on our front page, and there are clear signs the shortfall between exports and imports is on a deteriorating trend.

The trade gap is widening not because the effects of the strong pound on exports, which remain largely at unchanged levels, but because of stronger imports, and particularly imports of highly priced consumer goods like cars and electrical goods. Exporters seem to have resisted the temptation to sacrifice volume to sustain margins. The pound's appreciation has been taken on the chin, with most exporters prepared to accept that their dollar and German mark selling prices be left unchanged, despite the fact they now buy fewer pounds.

Sterling's ejection from the exchange rate mechanism gave competitiveness and margins a big boost in 1992. Unusually, the effects of that devaluation have not been whittled away by higher wages and inflation. This means there has been plenty of scope for exporters to take the pain of the new strong pound on margins rather than market share. This in turn makes it hard to predict whether a slowdown in export growth will occur later this year. Business surveys point to a sharp drop in orders which would normally be followed by a downturn in actual shipments.

On the other hand, half of the pound's appreciation to its current level – which looks as though it might be the peak – had occurred 12 months ago, so normally the

downturn in exports would already have happened. The overall impact of a rise in the exchange rate on growth might therefore turn out to be much smaller than normal.

Combined with the ever-growing evidence of the scale of the spending spree, this makes some of the gloomier economists, predicting a sharp downturn next year, look like real Eeyores. The Bank of England faces quite a conundrum.

Magellan's closure marks end of an era

The closure of Fidelity's Magellan fund to new investors marks the end of an era on Wall Street. Thanks to the stock-picking genius of its manager throughout the 1980s, Peter Lynch, the words Fidelity, Magellan and mutual fund are synonymous for many US private investors.

Fidelity accounts for 13 per cent of the huge American mutual fund market and Magellan, its flagship, is a massive fund. It had \$63bn of assets under management at the last count, bigger than the annual GDP of Ireland. It has a 10 per cent stake in more than 300 companies in its home market and at least 5 per cent in almost 900 around the world.

That is a measure of the fund's success but it is also its biggest problem. Running Magellan has been likened to steering an ocean liner in a crowded harbour. Attempting to

steal a march on its smaller, nimbler rivals has required it to take bigger and bigger gambles on which sectors or asset classes would outperform. In recent years these calls have tended to be wrong.

Jeff Vinit, Magellan's manager until last summer when he was replaced by Bob Stansky, was a subscriber to the Tony Dye view of the market. As a consequence he took a big position in bonds and cash and so missed out on the earlier stages of the recent staggering rise in the Dow. He paid with his job, and Magellan with almost \$10bn of withdrawn funds.

Over the last year, Mr Stansky has dumped the bonds, reduced the cash pile and bet heavily on the market continuing to rise. So far he has been proved right, the fund has started to outperform again and, as ever in this business, the punters are belatedly piling in.

Closing the fund makes good sense then, if only because the whole thing was becoming progressively unmanageable. What the move tells us about the level of the US market is less clear cut. While size is probably more of a problem in a bear market than a bull one, Fidelity's concerns about its expected flood of private investors into its funds argues persuasively that sheer weight of money will keep shares rising. He may have closed his doors, but there is no sign of Mr Stansky turning bearish. Then again, there are few better signals of the top of the market than surging mutual fund sales.

Securicor's mobile phone boss quits

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Securicor yesterday heralded a further shake-up of its troubled mobile phone business as it parted company with Ed Hough, chief executive of its communications division, by mutual agreement.

Mr Hough, 53, left his job with Securicor yesterday and did not have another post to go to. He is likely to receive a pay-off of around £280,000 from his two-year rolling contract. Last year he was paid £163,000 in-

cluding bonuses, with a basic salary of £140,000.

Jeff Pack, Securicor's group treasurer, said: "He went home yesterday and is not coming back to work. His resignation was by mutual agreement. Ed's interest in the business was really more to do with the growth phase."

Securicor said Chris Shirliffe, its finance director, would take direct control over Securicor Cellular Services, the mobile phone business in the UK which sells Celnat airtime. Securicor owns 40 per cent of

Celnat, with the remainder controlled by British Telecom.

Roger Wiggs, Securicor's chief executive, said a further announcement would be made within days about restructuring measures and management changes. Securicor shares fell 11.5p to 264p on the news.

Mr Hough's departure follows long-running troubles with the mobile business, which culminated in the spring with the announcement of a £18m exceptional restructuring charge. It covered write downs on the value of customer contracts in

Securicor's accounts because people were leaving the Celnat network at a much faster rate.

The charges contributed to a slump in Securicor's profits in the six months to the end of March, which fell to £19.1m from £47.6m.

Mr Pack said further action would be taken to weed out low-spending customers attracted to the network by big discounts. "The economies of service provision have changed dramatically over the past two years. There's been such a degree of bad debt that it's become

necessary to be more careful than before."

Though Mr Hough was not in direct control of Celnat, the mobile operator has also faced a series of fiascos, including the revelation this month of a £40m charge after the company abandoned work on a new billing system. It came on top of a £25m provision to cover billing delays, taken last year, of which £10m was charged to Securicor's first-half profits. In March Howard Ford left Celnat as managing director.

Jim McCafferty, a telecom-

munications analyst from ABN Amro Hoare Govett, said Mr Hough's resignation suggested Securicor was determined to get to grips with the division.

"They've realised these are loss-making businesses, so reporting direct to the finance director should help their visibility."

Other communications operations in the US controlled by Mr Hough will be the responsibility of Mr Wiggs. Securicor said Bob Shiver, a non-executive director of Intek, its US radio division, would become a full-time chairman and chief executive.

IN BRIEF

Philip Morris holds dividend to save cash

Philip Morris has decided to leave its quarterly dividend unchanged at 40 cents a share in a move designed to conserve cash for the tobacco industry's proposed \$368.5bn (£229bn) national settlement of health-related lawsuits. The company, which makes Marlboro cigarettes, is expected to pay about half the settlement. Based on the company's history of raising dividends by about 20 per cent, the move will cost shareholders 8 cents a share, or about \$194m each quarter on the 2.42 billion shares in issue. Philip Morris has increased its dividend 10 times in the past 10 years. It last failed to do so in 1993 after cutting the price of Marlboro cigarettes to halt the loss of market share to discount brands. The move is part of the efforts by the company's chairman, Geoffrey Bible, to convince Congress and the White House that the industry cannot afford to pay more.

Rolls-Royce gets \$75m order for engines

Rolls-Royce has received an order for five RB211-535 engines, worth \$75m (£47m), following Continental Airlines Holdings' decision to convert five of the options for 16 additional Boeing 757 aircraft announced in April into firm orders. The five new aircraft will be delivered in June and December 1998, and January, February and March 1999. Rolls-Royce Canada has signed a multi-year agreement with Continental Airlines for the repair and overhaul of the RB211-535E4 engines which power the airline's 757 fleet.

Johnson Fry appoints finance director

Johnson Fry Holdings has appointed Cathy Toman finance director with effect from 18 September. Paul Gildersleeves, the present finance director, will remain on the board as an executive director until 9 October, after which he will leave the company to pursue other business interests.

Beales Hunter profits down 36 per cent

Profits at Beales Hunter, the Loughborough-based engineers, fell 36 per cent to £2.11m in the year to the end of May, although turnover rose 11 per cent to £63.8m. The group operates three divisions – electrical, refrigeration and textiles. "Market conditions have made trading difficult," said chairman David Title. "The outlook is more encouraging following reorganisations this year."

Tinsley Robor buys pre-press company

Tinsley Robor, a leading supplier of packaging to the music and multimedia publishing industries, is buying Pinpoint, a pre-press company, for £2.7m cash, of which £1m is spread over the next three years based on meeting performance targets. Colin Baker, one of Pinpoint's two founders, will manage Pinpoint as a subsidiary of Tinsley Robor.

Proshare launches website for investors

Proshare, a supporter of wider share ownership, has launched a new website aimed at private investors. It offers more than 40 pages of free information to help investors understand key issues relating to share ownership. The site is at www.proshare.org.uk

Domnick Hunter warns of sterling knock

Domnick Hunter, the filtration products group, yesterday reported a 9.5 per cent increase in interim pre-tax profits to £4.6m, but warned that sterling would knock second-half results. Brian Thompson, chairman, said the company's hedging policy would limit the effects of the strong pound. Domnick said its industrial division showed outstanding performance, but the company was conducting a review of its process division after faltering progress due to "stronger sterling, changing market conditions and internal restructuring".

Chance expected to stay on at Sky

Cathy Newman

David Chance, second in command at BSkyB, is likely to extend his consultancy contract with the satellite broadcaster beyond next summer, according to senior sources at the company.

The deputy managing director announced he was to step down at the same time as Sam Chisholm, chief executive and managing director, who resigned due to ill-health.

Mr Chance said he would work as a consultant until next summer, but following a concerted campaign by Sky to make him change his mind and stay on, he is considering remaining for longer.

The impending departure of the top duo, combined with Sky's enforced withdrawal from British digital broadcasting, knocked more than £2bn off Sky's market value as the shares declined from a peak of over 600p to just above 400p.

As a result, Sky had come under pressure to win Mr Chance back. In particular, some institutional shareholders had accused Rupert Murdoch, who has a 40 per cent stake in Sky through News Corporation, of nepotism by promoting his daughter Elisabeth to general manager, broadcasting.

City analysts said yesterday that if Mr Chance decided to extend his contract with Sky, he would help to assuage investors' concerns about the strength of the management team.

One analyst said: "It's a demonstration of faith in the future of the company. There was always a fear that the two biggest people were getting out before the launch of digital."

Mark Booth, head of JSkyB, Mr Murdoch's Japanese satellite operation, has been appointed to lead the company through the difficult birth of digital satellite television, which will see the launch of 200 channels next spring.

Another analyst said: "It would be encouraging to have as strong a management team as possible in a formative period for Sky."

Wiggins to sue Brent Council

Andrew Yates

Wiggins, the property investment company, yesterday said it was suing Brent Council, claiming officials at the London borough had frustrated its attempt to build a £6.8m leisure complex at the site of an old swimming pool at Kingsbury, near Wembley.

Oliver Iny, chief executive of Wiggins, said: "Brent granted us a lease for the site but didn't carry out their promises. We are putting in a huge claim for damages. We are claiming significantly more money than the £3m we have spent to far on the site. Brent will hurt."

Wiggins also announced plans to create 6,000 jobs in Kent by developing a 400-acre site it has just acquired at Manton airport near Margate, the place where the bouncing bomb was developed by Barnes Wallace during the Second World War.

It plans to build up to 6 million square feet of factories and industrial premises around the airport. Cummins, the US diesel engine manufacturer, has already agreed to set up a factory on the land. The development will include two huge lakes and the group even plans to import 1,000 chestnut trees from Brussels to plant on the site.

Mr Iny also plans to expand the airport. "We are looking to increase its passenger and cargo operations. We are in talks with a major tour operator to use the airport and hope to start international flights as soon as next year," he said.

Wiggins will soon unveil its ideas to revamp the struggling Pleasure Island Complex in Liverpool – it acquired when it bought rival Tomorrow's Leisure last March. Mr Iny aims to "transform Liverpool" by building a spectacular leisure complex.

Mr Iny has revived Wiggins' fortunes since joining the company four years ago.

The group has already built a 500-home village on the site of a former mental hospital in Lincoln, which includes pubs and amenities. Now it is developing another former mental home in Fairfield.

Wiggins still hopes to build the complex at Kingsbury, which would include a multi-screen cinema and swimming pool, but has been forced to provide £3m in its accounts for costs incurred on the site, pending the outcome of the dispute with Brent Council. Even so it announced a 384 per cent leap in profits to £19.9m for the year to March.

Brent Council was unavailable for comment last night.

London leads the world in costly hotels

John Willcock

British athletics may be going through a dodgy patch, but there are two areas in which we still have clear world records: London has the most expensive hotels on the planet, while the UK has the highest-priced rail travel.

These chastening facts come from the tenth edition of the Prices and Earnings Around the Globe survey from UBS. The Swiss bank started producing the survey in the 1970s, and it appears every three years.

According to its compiler, Daniel Kalt, head of UBS Economic Research in Zurich, many companies use the report to fix employee pay levels around the world.

Thankfully the UK doesn't break the bank in every department. London is the world's ninth-most expensive city in a top ten dominated by Scandinavian cities, although Tokyo leads the pack.

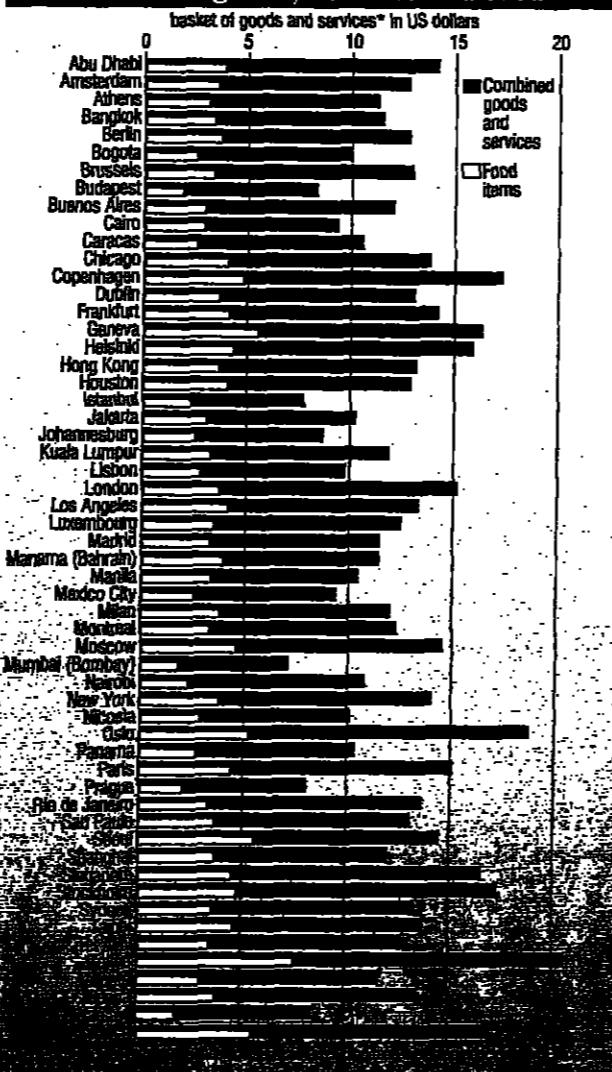
The survey finds that an overnight stay for two in the British capital will cost an average £248, well ahead of the global figure of £168 (£104). Eating out on the other hand is good value compared with most Asian cities and Moscow.

For hard-pressed rail travellers in the UK, privatisation does not seem to have translated into more competitive prices quite yet, to put it mildly. The UK is the most expensive in the world with fare prices of £32 for a 120-mile second-class train ticket, some way ahead of the next most expensive – Switzerland. The global average is just £10.50.

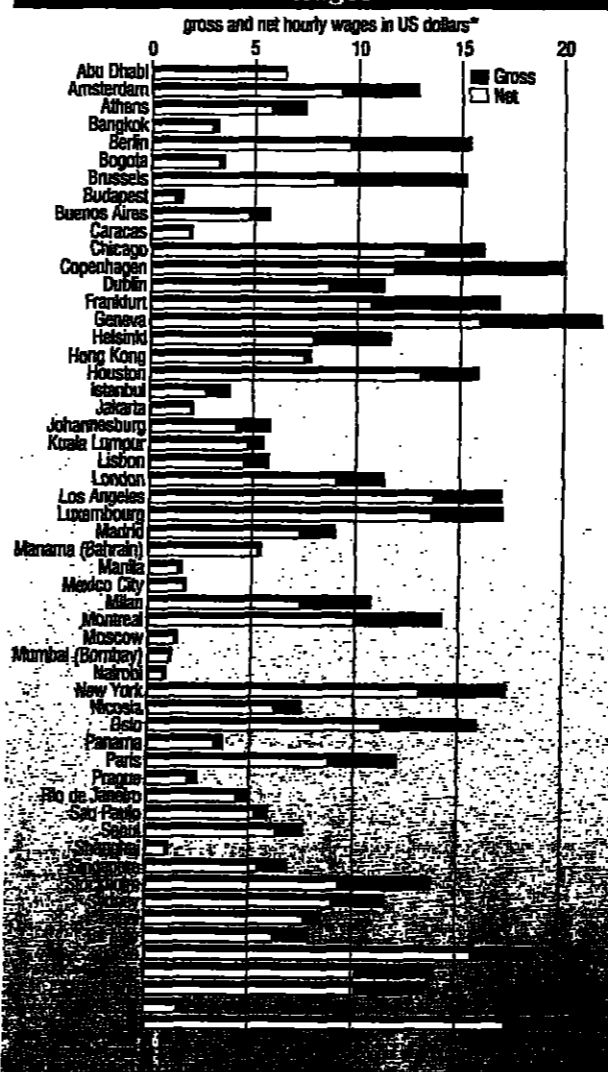
The survey will further fuel dinner-party gossip in London about house prices; London has the highest rents for unfurnished two-bedroom flats, along with Moscow and Jakarta. For three-bedroom flats London is on a par with cities in Asia, New York and Moscow.

On the other hand, poor old Londoners earn less than their counterparts in 20 other cities around the globe, including

Cost of goods, services and food



Wages



Paris and Frankfurt. London wages are the same as those in Sydney and only just ahead of Dublin – this, despite the fact that Londoners put in some of the longest hours in western Europe. They make up for it a bit with their holidays, an average of 20.8 days, which is in the middle of global comparisons.

Globally the top earners are to be found in Zurich (home of UBS), Geneva, Copenhagen, Tokyo and New York. The lowest gross wages were paid in

places like Shanghai, Moscow, Budapest, Mexico City and Caracas.

If you decide to leave the restaurants behind and buy your own food, a basket of grub as defined by UBS would cost £226 in London, just below the European average of £244, cheaper than Zurich at £342 but ahead of Lisbon at £168. (At £226 this is obviously a Swiss bank's idea of a "food basket".)

As for getting around, Londoners have the fifth-most ex-

pensive tube and bus fares – 13 times dearer than Shanghai – but Londoners get a slightly better deal when it comes to taxis with black cabs only the 10th-most expensive in the world.

UBS likes to jazz up its figures by working out how long it takes to earn enough money to buy a Big Mac anywhere in the world, to give an idea of comparative purchasing power. Fast-food fanatics in the US come off the best, taking just 12 minutes to earn enough for a

burger, while their colleagues in London have to slog away for 20 minutes. That compares with three hours for a worker in Nairobi.

It looks as if Brits travelling to the Continent to buy their cars more cheaply are right to do so. Car prices are lowest in central and eastern Europe and in North America. Prices in the UK are the sixth-most dear. Russian motorists get the best deal on road tax at £9.30, while Singaporeans pay £617.

Approaches to buy stakes in Tisa are thought to have come from neighbouring Portugal Telecom and Citicorp, the US banking giant.

Next month Telefonica will confirm that John Reed, head of Citicorp, has joined Tisa's board as non-executive vice-president, fuelling rumours of closer co-operation.

If Telefonica does agree to sell stakes in Tisa to outside bidders, it would trigger the 10 per cent option currently held by MCI, which will transfer to Concert after the merger.

BT and MCI announced their alliance with Telefonica in April, scoring a coup by prising the Spanish group out of the rival Unisource alliance controlled by AT&T of the US. The deal included BT taking a 2 per cent stake in Telefonica, which bought 1 per cent of BT.

Tisa is the biggest phone operator in Latin America, with communications companies in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru and Puerto Rico. James Downey, from stockbrokers

BT tipped to take £310m Spanish stake

Chris Godsmark

British Telecom was yesterday tipped to expand its overseas ambitions further, with the prospect of a \$300m (£310m) deal within months to increase its interest in its Spanish partner, Telefonica.

Analysts said BT, to be renamed Concert when the merger with MCI is completed on 1 January, would soon be given the opportunity to take up an option to buy 10 per cent of Telefonica's lucrative international subsidiary. The company,

called Tisa, owns stakes in several Latin American phone companies in a market forecast to almost double in size to \$60bn by 2000.

BT shares fell a further 9p yesterday to 404.5p, as investors continued to digest the detail of its revised £11bn takeover bid for MCI, which knocked more than £3bn off the purchase price. BT's big UK shareholders were unhappy at the lack of any "escape" clause allowing the company to back out of the new agreement, along with the \$750m which BT will have to

pay MCI if investors reject the deal.

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Tisa is the biggest phone operator in Latin America, with communications companies in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru and Puerto Rico. James Downey, from stockbrokers

Aluminium looks good for Billiton

After a shy start, shares in Billiton, the base metals company recently demerged from South Africa's Gencor, are gaining confidence. Floated at 220p at the end of July, Billiton's share price closed yesterday at 248p, pushed up higher by a combination of positive analyst reports and good reasons to keep faith.

In themselves, yesterday's sketchy, unaudited numbers included in Gencor's full year figures to June, were no more than reassuring. Unsurprisingly Billiton beat its own US\$330m flotation forecasts, reporting pre-tax profits up 4 per cent to \$335m. The 43 per cent jump in aluminium profits, over 45 per cent of the total, to \$193m reflected full inclusion of associate Alusaf and the fall in ferro-alloy profits was flagged. Billiton's audited figures, reported on 2 September, will be more meaningful.

The argument too that Billiton's share price will be driven by its imminent inclusion in the FTSE and the need for tracker funds to buy is weak. True, capitalised at over £5bn and with a primary listing in London, Billiton is likely to join the FTSE club, even though 70 per cent of its profits are made in South Africa. UK tracker funds are still short of Billiton's shares, given the strong South African shareholding. But extractive industry stocks represent a small fraction of the total UK stock market - around 1.5 per cent - so fund managers need not rush to buy.

More compelling is to look at base metals prices, particularly when comparing share ratings for Billiton, an aluminium player, with UK rival Rio Tinto, which makes around 40 per cent of its profits from copper. Copper and aluminium prices have been heading in the opposite directions. The price of copper has been steadily falling. With the operating costs of producing copper considerably less than the copper spot price, players have expanded capacity. The pressure on prices is likely to put a brake on Rio's earnings growth.

Aluminium is in better shape. A glut of the metal in the early 1990s hit prices, leading to a cartel of the big players, agreeing to cut capacity.

Enduring caution about oversupply, plus high operating costs relative to the metal's spot price, should keep aluminium prices firm. So will growing demand in US packaging and the automotive, aerospace and building industries - all heavy users of aluminium.

On UBS's numbers, Billiton is currently rated at just over 15 times forward earnings compared to 16.5 times for Rio and 14 times for the extractive sector. A discount to Rio is not inappropriate.

Billiton is a less diversified company and needs to prove itself outside South Africa. But Billiton's management is aggressive and, with proceeds from the float, has the firepower and

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

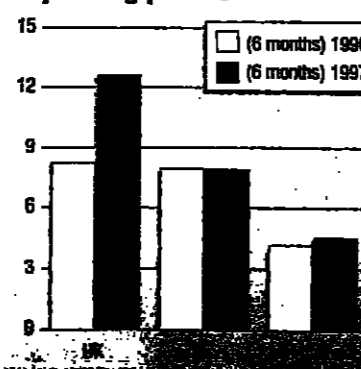
EDITED BY SAMEENA AHMAD

Kalon Group: At a glance

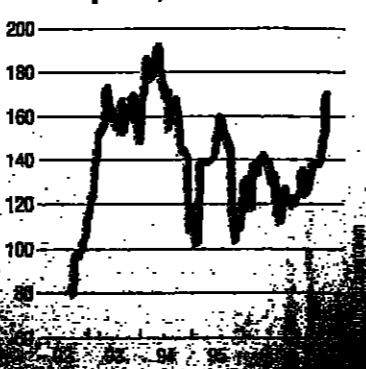
Market value: £506m, share price 171p (+9p)

Trading record	1994	1995	1996	95/96	96/97
				(6 months)	(6 months)
Turnover (£m)	157.3	374.1	524.7	278.6	292.5
Pre-tax profits (£m)	19.6	(2.9)	19.3	19.6	24.4
Earnings per share (p)	10.1	(1.2)	3.1	3.7	4.5
Dividends per share (p)	4.5	4.8	5.2	1.7	2.0

Operating profit £m



Share price pence



appetite to diversify. It has already outlined bold expansion plans in the nickel, coal and copper markets. Given that and prospects of faster earnings growth than Rio, Billiton's discount to Rio should narrow. Good value.

Kalon prepares to splash out

Kalon, the Yorkshire-based paints group, has been an erratic performer since its merger with Euridep, the French paints subsidiary of Total, two years ago.

Shares in the group have sunk from 160p to barely over 100p towards the end of 1995, before recovering strongly this year.

The price perked up another 9p to 171p yesterday on the back of a 24 per cent increase in first-half profits and news of greater cost cutting at the merged entity.

At the time of the deal Kalon said it anticipated £10m total cost savings. Yesterday it revised that to £23.5m savings by 2000. Most of the additional benefits will come from France as the UK restructure is already completed.

Kalon's performance has been creditable given the unfortunate timing of Euridep, a deal giving Total a 66 per cent holding.

The French economy hit the skids almost as soon as the merger was consummated. Managing director Mike Hennessy estimates the economic downturn in France has knocked £10m off profits with no sign of an upturn.

As France is the group's largest market, Kalon has had to work hard to achieve growth with most benefits coming from cost cutting and in-fill acquisitions.

The hike in interim profits to June to £24.4m was achieved in spite of the strong pound. This knocked 10 per cent off sales, but shaved just £1.8m from profits.

Though France remains grim, the UK is showing signs of life. UK sales were 5 per cent down due to the previously announced loss of some private-label contracts.

Sales of decorative paints to DIY sheds such as Sainsbury's Homebase and Do It All rose by 4 per cent. This is the first glimmer of hope in the market for several years.

But the limiting factor for Kalon is that though house prices have risen strongly in the South-east, the relatively low level of housing transactions has kept the lid on sales.

In France margins are ahead but trade volumes have been badly hit by lower government spending.

On the acquisition front, talk of a foray into the US was dismissed by the

company yesterday. Kalon is more likely to concentrate on Europe, where it is already the second-largest paints group. Germany, which is the largest paint market in Europe, should be the next target.

On full-year forecasts of £45m, the shares trade on a forward rating of 22 falling to 18 times. High enough.

Time that Marley homed in

With the housing market and the commercial property sector taking off it is logical to assume that the building materials sector should also be booming.

So why then has the materials sector fallen by more than 5 per cent in the last year at a time when the stock market has raced away?

The simple answer is that many of the building suppliers went overseas to try to escape problems at home when the housing market fell into recession in the early 1990s. That was fine while continental European markets were flourishing. But the strong pound and an alarming tail-off in important markets such as Germany has put a real dent in profits.

Marley, which sells everything from roof tiles to plastic drainage and plumbing systems, has been one of the worst casualties. Its shares, which slipped another 5.5p to 109.5p yesterday, have plunged from 140p last October.

However, the fall looks overdue. True, sterling's strength knocked £2.3m off profits in the six months to June and hit exports of flooring products to Germany. Even so, underlying profits rose 11 per cent to £28.8m, ignoring the one-off profit the company made from selling its automotive business last year.

Strong growth in housing starts in Britain, forecast to rise by around 10 per cent this year, is helping Marley's blocks and roof tiles business and it should be able to make price rises of 10 per cent stick this year.

The rate of growth will no doubt slow, but the market looks set fair for the next few years.

Syco, the US plastic furniture manufacturer bought in 1995, has been a serious disappointment due to an indifferent US retail market.

The episode gives little confidence that Marley, which is on the hunt for more acquisitions, can spend its money wisely.

That said, the recent purchase of Flexco, a US flooring group, looks promising, and the worries are more than reflected in Marley's low rating. Analysts are forecasting full-year profits of £50m, putting the shares on a prospective price/earnings ratio of 11. Good value.

Carl Lewis speeds off-track to back AIM flotation

Andrew Yates

Carl Lewis, one of the world's greatest athletes and winner of nine Olympic gold medals, yesterday took a break from the track to launch the flotation of Trialtir, a company which has developed a revolutionary mountain bike used by the sports star.

Mr Lewis likes the new bike so much he indicated he was looking to buy shares in the company when it floats on the AIM market next month. He will receive a royalty on every bike, which retails for US\$500 (£310), in return for starting in a world-wide advertising campaign.

Robin Kesner, Trialtir's largest shareholder and its American chief executive, stands to make a paper profit of up to \$4m on flotation. She will own 50 per cent of the company which is likely to be valued at around £8m. The directors will also be eligible for a share-option scheme but Trialtir has no plans to make Mr Lewis a director and he will not receive any options.

The mountain bike has a unique dual-action system which means that cyclists can pump their arms up and down as well as pedalling to set the wheels in motion. The cyclist can activate the new action, which drives both wheels, by flicking a switch on the handlebars, making it easier to go up hills or pedal over rough terrain.

Mr Lewis said at a press conference in London: "This is something that could change the way we think about health and fitness. I have had the bike for over a year and use it every day. I use it to take my dog out for a run and the bike goes everywhere; on hills, sand or just the street."

This is the first business venture Mr Lewis has become involved with since announcing his retirement from athletics. On Tuesday he crowned his glittering international career by anchoring a US 4x100m relay team to victory in Berlin, his last European track appearance.

Mr Lewis denied he would be



Carl Lewis sporting the revolutionary Trialtir bike in his first post-retirement business venture. Photograph: Adrian Dennis

tempted to return to the track against some of the world's current sprinting greats for one last big pay day. "Financially things are fine. The only reason I run is for passion and from my standpoint the passion is no longer there," he said.

He plans to continue his lucrative association with the sportswear giant Nike and is planning to get involved with other entertainment and business opportunities. "I am looking forward to my retirement [next month]. It is like graduating from high school and it is easier as I have had such a great career," he said.

Trialtir raised £160,000 via a private placing earlier this year to develop the bike and plans to raise another £1m on flotation. If the London flotation is successful it is considering a secondary listing on the US Nasdaq market.

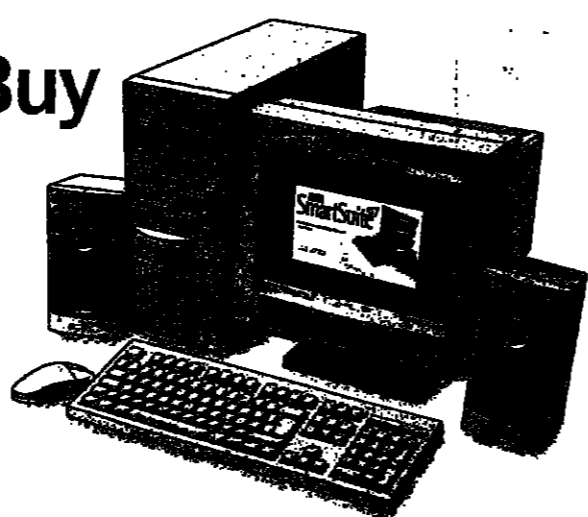
The group aims to market the product in the US and Europe on QVC, the home shopping channel and on "infomercials" starring Mr Lewis.

It aims to sell 200,000 bikes a year within two years. The company has published illustrated profit forecasts of £1.875m on sales of £6.5m for the year to September 1998.

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- 17" SVGA 0.28dp screen
- 512K pipeline burst cache
- SIS 64-bit advanced graphics using 4Mb system RAM
- 3D stereo sound with Wavetable software
- Executive speaker system with large subwoofer
- MJN advanced ATX mid tower system
- Windows 95 and Lotus SmartSuite 97
- Standard features listed below

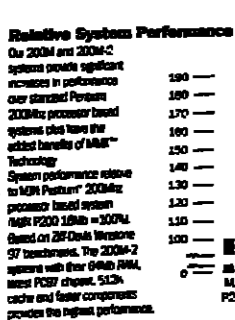
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US company mounts Kalamazoo rescue

Sameena Ahmad

Kalamazoo, the troubled UK computer services company which named itself after a one-horse town in Michigan, has once again turned to the US, this time for a rescue financing.

Reynolds & Reynolds, a US leader in car dealer software, is to buy a 26.5 per cent stake in Kalamazoo for £21.5m, with an initial cash injection of £17.68m. The cash deal at 130p a share is a staggering 72 per cent premium to the pre-bid price.

Shares in Kalamazoo, which took the opportunity to warn of a substantial first-half loss due mainly to investment in its car dealer software Elite, closed 9.5p ahead at 85p.

The deal ends months of takeover speculation. Shares in the company, which tumbled earlier this year after a profits

warning and revelations of accounting problems, have been supported by bid rumours, including a shunned approach from UK rival Lynx.

Bob Jordan, chairman, called the link-up with Ohio-based Reynolds, an "elegant solution to a difficult problem". Analysts said the deal looked remarkably free of strings, wiping out Kalamazoo's sky-high debt. Though Reynolds, which is capitalised at \$1.6bn (£1bn), will appoint non-executive directors to Kalamazoo's board and share products, there are few other binding conditions and Reynolds has agreed not to buy more shares in Kalamazoo for two years.

"This is a true strategic alliance," said Mr Jordan. They are putting £20m into the company as a hell of a premium, they will exchange products and put non-executives in, but

they have no special privileges."

The deal will give Kalamazoo the cash it desperately needs to develop its car dealer software system. "We were near the limit of our bank borrowing facilities. Our gearing was uncomfortably high. We are having a torrid first half," said Mr Jordan.

He was equivocal on whether Reynolds was planning to launch a full bid after two years: "We'll cross that bridge when we come to it."

Analysts said that Reynolds, which has a good spread of products in the US, was a sound partner and was probably interested in Kalamazoo for the platform it would provide into the European car dealer software market, where it has no foothold. Kalamazoo has a 45 per cent market share in the UK.

Investment banking helps Credit Suisse profits rise 70%

Tom Stevenson

A good performance from investment banking helped Switzerland's largest bank, Credit Suisse, to a 70 per cent increase in first-half profits.

Credit Suisse First Boston contributed almost two-thirds of the group's interim profit of 1.4bn Swiss francs (£580m), despite a sharp rise in staff costs.

Credit Suisse highlighted CSFB's "outstanding" performance, which it said had benefited from strong economic and market conditions in most countries, including the emerging markets. The bank said revenues

and profits were growing faster than most of its competitors.

CSFB contributed net profits of SFr835m, 62 per cent of the total and a 51 per cent increase on the first half of 1996. The rise came despite a 40 per cent rise in expenses. John Leonard, an analyst at Salomon Brothers, warned: "Although cost increases were well covered by revenue growth in the first half, an awful lot of revenue growth just went straight into costs."

CSFB produced a return on equity of 18.6 per cent, below the 25 per cent reported recently by SBC Warburg, the London-based investment bank owned by rival Swiss Bank Cor-

poration. Credit Suisse said its underlying return, stripping out CSFB's money markets and lending operations, was a more respectable 26 per cent.

Elsewhere, CS Private Banking made SFr676m, up 30 per cent, while CS Asset Management chipped in SFr98m. Credit Suisse's domestic operations struggled, in line with its competitors, losing SFr150m.

Credit Suisse is in the middle of a £5.5bn takeover of Swiss insurance group Winterthur, with shareholders due to vote on the deal on 5 September.

The deal will produce one of the world's leading bancassurance groups.

Rushmere turns to business training

Clifford German

Rushmere Wynne, the loss-making former publisher, yesterday agreed to buy the residential training division of Courts Consulting for £6.5m in cash in a deal which completes its conversion into a provider of business training services.

The division consists of two operating companies, Eynsham Hall near Witney in Oxfordshire, and Chewton Place, near Keynsham, not far from Bristol. The two centres are hired out to UK companies for staff training activities and made an operating profit of £1.06m on a turnover of £3.7m in 1996.

The deal is being financed by a £4m loan, a bank overdraft facility of £500,000 and an open offer of 230 million shares at 1p each. Shareholders will be offered three new shares for each two shares held.

It is the third big reorganisation this year for the struggling group which was launched on AIM two years ago when 27 per cent of the company was floated, raising £750,000. The cash was used to take over another small publisher, Rosters, and a jobbing printer, HS Printers.

The shares were suspended at 3p last November when the company warned it would make a loss of £100,000 in the 10 months to the end of September 1995 instead of the profit it forecast when it floated. It later reported losses of £329,000 for the period, and a further loss of £293,000 for the six months to the end of March this year.

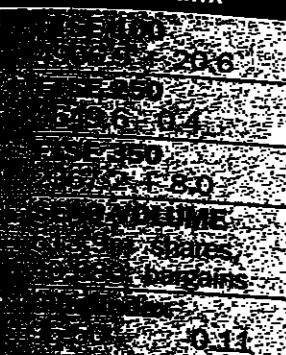
In March Rushmere Wynne bought Fairplace Training, which operates training facilities at Birchton Court in London, from Fairplace Consulting for cash and 50 million shares, and Fairplace Training's chief executive, Celyn Gardner, became executive chairman of Rushmere Wynne.

Last month the original loss-making publishing interests were sold to BT Batsford for £225,000 in cash and shares. The business will be renamed Birchton International. The group yesterday reported an unaudited loss of £370,000 for the nine months to the end of March.

صكزا من الاموال

market report / shares

Data Bank



Share spotlight



Norwich Union on a high as takeover rumours swirl

Taking Stock

Norwich Union was never expected to enjoy a long stock market life. The popular view when it floated in June was its days of independence were numbered. If rumours drifting around yesterday have any substance, the famous old insurer will soon be bowing to that seemingly inevitable takeover bid.

In busy trading its shares rose 10p to 345.5p, highest yet. The story going the rounds was that Halifax, off 3.5p at 714p, was preparing a predatory strike.

Norwich's perceived vulnerability was highlighted by Halifax's comments it was looking for acquisitions and insurance was one of the areas it fancied. The building society-turned-bank has a £3.5bn war chest. It should therefore have no difficulty absorbing Norwich with a £6.8bn capitalisation.

The bid talk mingled with the usual pre-index meeting ac-

tivity. Norwich is not yet a constituent of any of the FTSE share indices. It will go into Footsie next month, together with Billiton, the mining group, and former building society, Woolwich.

Yet the various tracker funds, which attempt to mirror Footsie or other indices, have had plenty of time to build stakes in Norwich, Billiton and Woolwich. They could also have picked up shares in the flotations.

Billiton, which produced figures yesterday, is also at a peak up to 248p. Woolwich is well below its best level. The shares rose 2p to 293.5p against a 334p closing high.

The Footsie steering committee meets on 10 September. Any changes take effect on 22 September.

On present form Tate & Lyle, Hanson and Imperial Tobacco are set for relegation to the FTSE 250 index.



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year

Hanson's departure is due to its four-way demerger which removed its energy and chemical operations as well as the other likely casualty, Imps. Even so, its loss of Footsie membership is another illustration of the demise of the conglomerate culture.

It will be the first time since the index was created in 1964 that Hanson has not been a constituent.

A possible irony is that Williams, which lost its place early this year, could just creep back into Footsie. It was once a takeover marauder in the best conglomerate fashion. Recently it shed its conglomerate image by concentrating

on fire protection and security products. The takeover of Chubb Security boosted its size and, at 351.5p, it is valued at £2.66bn.

The market experienced another uneventful session with Footsie, in moderate trading, managing a 20.6 points gain to 4,906.9.

Rank, the leisure group, headed the blue-chip leader board with a 14.5p gain to 360p, only 24.5p from its year's low. The modest rally is probably due to the group's share buy-back programme, which has been going on this month, and rumours Hans, emerging as the leisure bidder for all seasons, could be interested.

Vague bid talk lifted Abbey National 16.5p to 839p.

Whitbread fell 13.5p to 795p as HSBC, which visited the brewer on Tuesday, appeared to make cautious noises. Beer sales in June and July were said to be lower than a year ago; a not altogether surprising development as the European Cup inflated sales in 1996.

HSBC was also said to be negative on Scottish & Newcastle, ahead of today's yearly meeting. NatWest Securities, however, expects an upbeat message from the nation's biggest brewer. Scottish fell 8.5p to 723.5p.

Carlton Communications softened 14.5p to 495p on the Merrill Lynch forecast of a £31m hit from the abolition of the Channel Four funding formula. Iomega, the radio-based telephone group, has failed to dial the right numbers since it floated last month. Offered at 390p, the shares rose to 421p

on the first day of dealings, but have been in decline since. They fell, reflecting disappointing figures, a further 16.5p to 332.5p.

Cadbury Schweppes, ahead of an analyst visit to its US operations, rose 4p to 587p. There are worries Cadbury's American soft drink side is being squeezed unmercifully by the cola giants, Coca-Cola and Pepsi Cola. In some quarters the Cadbury visit is seen as expressing confidence about its transatlantic business. ABN Amro Hoare Govett put the shares on its buy list.

Kalamazoo, the computer group, had a volatile session, ending 9.5p up at 85p. It has been in bid talks but opted for a deal with Reynolds & Reynolds, a US group. The Americans are pumping in £13.6m at 130p a share, taking their stake to 26.5 per cent. At one time Kalamazoo was up 29.5p.

A big trade in Cliveden, the up-market hotel group, attracted attention. In a broker-to-broker deal 566,666 shares changed hands at 64p, just above the market price. There has been bid talk with Prince al-Waleed bin Talal, nephew of King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, rumoured to be interested. Cliveden has warned planning delays will hit current year's results. The shares, spurred by bid rumours, reached 99.5p earlier this year.

Pan Andean Resources, still to recover from last year's misadventure, continues to negotiate with oil majors to develop in Bolivia. The company is rumoured to be thinking about leading a consortium for a "wildcat" drill in a promising area 10 miles from its first, unsuccessful well. Its shares, down 3.5p at 45p, touched 135.5p last year.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details: Ex rights = Ex-dividend = Ex a United Securities Market a Suspended = Fully Paid Nil Paid Stock. Source: FT Information.

The Independent Index

The index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from London Stock Exchange. Simply dial 0891 223 333, and when prompted to do so, enter the 4-digit code printed next to each share. To access the latest financial reports dial 0891 223 333 followed by one of the two-digit codes below.

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Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume
BT	340000	Shell Transport	92000	ASDA Group	70000	Luxbury	50000
Colson	140000	Smith Barney	80000	Rita Royce	60000	Wardlaw	50000
Norwich Union	130000	BT	80000	Lloyds TSB	60000	Halifax	40000
GUS	100000	General Elect	80000	Scottish Power	50000	PowerGen	40000
Wardlaw	90000	Crestar	70000	Parade Island	50000	BP	40000

FTSE 100 Index hour by hour

Open 4898.5 down 18	11.00 4878.0 down 20	14.00 4900.0 up 12
09.00 4898.5 down 18	12.00 4894.0 up 6	15.00 4902.0 up 22
10.00 4878.0 down 18	13.00 4901.0 up 7	16.00 4903.0 up 10
		Close 4906.0 up 20

Stock	Price	Change	Volume	Stock	Price	Change	Volume
BT	421.0	+12.0	10000	Shell	795.0	-13.5	5000
Colson	140.0	+10.0	5000	ASDA	70.0	+4.0	3000
Norwich	345.5	+10.0	2000	Rita Royce	60.0	+2.0	2000
GUS	100.0	+5.0	1000	Lloyds TSB	60.0	+1.0	1000
Wardlaw	90.0	+3.0	500	Scottish Power	50.0	+1.0	500

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229	Novo Inc	222	27	15	9494	32	87	Charm H	57		21	80	2257
230	Nord	777	+1		444	329		Coste Group	280		44	14	2260
231	Cher Co	36			257	57		Dart	254		52	14	1378
232	Callene	43			210			Dawson Group	200		37	14	1381
233	Overseas (Japan)	1			3550	88		Enduram	88				1382
234	CR (Africa)	1			3573								

Industrial decline is no horror story, just a sign of success

There is a spectre haunting Europe, or so you might have been led to believe. It is the threat of a haemorrhage of industrial jobs from the rich countries to the cheap-labour Third World.

An unholy alliance of left-wing bleeding hearts and right-wing nationalists is taking arms against the process of "globalisation", especially direct investment by multinationals in the newly industrialising countries, which they blame for the loss of jobs in manufacturing at home. The demands vary from outright protectionism to the imposition of minimum labour standards on developing countries, but they rest on the same interpretation of the "economic horror" (to quote the title of a recent French bestseller) of the global economy.

Some voices of reason have long been pointing out the excesses and errors of this global nightmare school of economic analysis. (One of Paul Krugman's excellent demolition jobs, *The Age of Diminished Expectations*, has just been issued in paperback by MIT Press.) However, a recent paper published by the International Monetary Fund goes even further, suggesting that de-industrialisation in the rich economies is not only caused by trade with poorer countries, it is also a sign of a vigorous and dynamic economy. The more the share of manufacturing has shrunk, the more successful the economy.

The authors, Robert Rowthorn, a professor of economics at Cambridge University, and the IMF economist Ramana Ramaswamy, write: "De-industrialisation is not necessarily a symptom of the failure of a country's manufacturing sector, or for that matter of the economy as a whole. On the contrary, de-industrialisation is simply the natural outcome of the process of successful economic development."

Their argument is that economic development involves a process of shifting employment and output from one sector to another, from agriculture to manufacturing and then to services. The process is driven by productivity growth. Employment, in particular, shifts from



Diane Coyle

An unholy alliance of left-wing bleeding hearts and right-wing nationalists is taking arms against 'globalisation', which they blame for the loss of jobs in manufacturing at home

high productivity to low productivity activities. De-industrialisation therefore reflects the success of manufacturing in boosting levels of productivity and efficiency.

The paper gives figures showing that the manufacturing share in total employment and value added

has been declining in the OECD countries since about 1970—earlier in the US. For the "industrial" countries as a whole (or should that be "post-industrial"), the proportion of employees working in manufacturing has fallen from 28 per cent in 1970 to 18 per cent by 1994. By contrast, service sector employment has climbed from 42 per cent to 65 per cent. Although the shift from spending on services has been smaller, the greater productivity gains in manufacturing have pushed down the share of employment in manufacturing.

There are differences between countries that seem to be explained by trade patterns, but not trade with developing countries. Specifically, Japan has gained a bigger chunk of the export market for manufactures, while the US has lost a big chunk. This explains the faster-than-average pace of de-industrialisation in America and its slower pace in Japan.

A second difference is that the level of employment in US industry has not declined in absolute terms, whereas it has in Europe. In the latter case slow growth has linked de-industrialisation with unemployment and stagnant earnings. But the authors conclude: "Even if these countries had grown faster than they actually did during this period, de-industrialisation would still have occurred, though with more favourable effects on living standards and employment."

Breaking down the possible causes of de-industrialisation, they find that for the group of OECD countries as a whole, the 9.6 per cent drop in the share of manu-

facturing employment can be attributed to: higher productivity growth in industry (minus 6.3 per cent); trade (0.2 per cent—small but positive); weak investment (minus 1.8 per cent); and miscellaneous (minus 1.7 per cent).

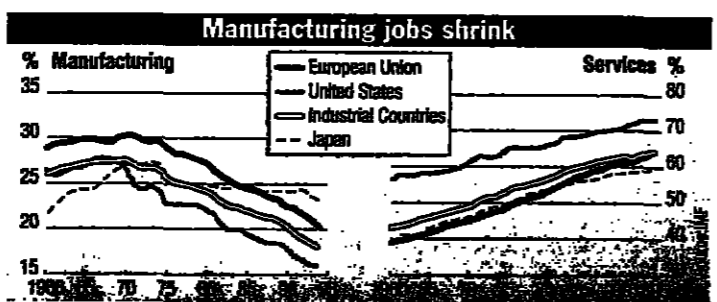
The trade effect for the whole group combines a big negative for the US and a big positive for Japan. Low investment played a small part in manufacturing job losses everywhere apart from the US.

Their conclusions are that the decline of industry is a concern to the extent that it causes disruption during the adjustment, but no further. Future prosperity in the rich nations will depend on the growth of productivity in the dominant service sector.

Separate IMF papers in the same batch provide more ammunition against the ghoulish tendency. One confirms earlier research that it is hard to find any evidence that imports from developing countries have had a big impact on either wage levels or income inequality in the rich countries. Increased trade accounts for 10-20 per cent of the changes in earnings during the past two decades, although the report warns that future growth in trade could make workers increasingly vulnerable and insecure.

Another finds that low foreign labour standards, like low wages, are the mirror of low levels of productivity on the part of Third World workers. They are not a form of unfair competition. "There is little basis for fearing a competitive 'race to the bottom'," it says, warning that the introduction of minimum labour standards in trade agreements would harm the very people—the exploited poor of the developing world—they are claimed to help.

"Deindustrialisation: causes and implications", by Robert Rowthorn and Ramana Ramaswamy, *The Effect of Globalization on Wages in the Advanced Economies*, by Matthew Slaughter and Phillip Swagel, *International Labour Standards and International Trade*, by Stephen Goh. All IMF working papers, April 1997.



Pugwash might be worth a punt as he sets sail for US

PEOPLE & BUSINESS



Pugwash: He could be bigger than Thomas the Tank Engine

Fancy taking a punt on Pugwash? Britt Allcroft, the AIM-listed company headed by Angus Wright, owns the world-wide rights to Captain Pugwash and has begun shooting 26 new episodes of the cartoon pirate show.

The programmes should be shown in a year's time, and while Britt Allcroft's share price has been a party-pooper over the past year they might pick up when the market hears about plans to screen Pugwash in the US.

An industry source said: "This could be bigger than Thomas the Tank Engine. It knocks the spots off Sooty and Noddy in the popularity stakes."

Britt Allcroft also holds the licence to develop products based on another cartoon hero, Thomas the Tank Engine, including toys and T-shirts.

Watch out in your local shops for Pugwash T-shirts. Other piratical clothes are mooted. Such products will never compare however with "Thomas the Tank Engine Fromage Fraie" as well as Thomas rice seasoning, popular in Japan, apparently.

There has never been a better time to be a slimming train-spotter, it appears.

Thomas alone generated sales of £11.5m and profits of £2m for the year to June 1996, with this year's results due out on Monday. City sources expect the numbers comfortably to beat analysts' forecasts thanks to pre-Christmas sales of Thomas.

James Sherwood, the larger than life millionaire industrialist who owns the Great North Eastern Railway, has given an interview to this month's issue of *The Railway Magazine* which makes sobering reading for anyone planning a train journey.

At one point the American-born tycoon was asked about the telephone inquiry bureaux (TEBs) the Government ordered the new rail owners to set up after privatisation, to enable passengers nationwide to find out train times, despite the fragmentation of the industry.

The TEBs were criticised in a recent report for failing to answer

holiday camp business next Monday, which is why perhaps it has recruited Ken Johnston as Butlin's sales and marketing director. Mr Johnston joins from Pepsi Cola Company, where he was director of brand marketing for Pepsi's investment into central Europe.

Prior to that he was the country manager for Pepsi's launch in Israel, so he has plenty of international experience. Perhaps Butlin's is going to take on Euro Disney in France?

Back to reality. Mr Johnston, 37, got a BSc in civil engineering from the University of Lancaster after attending Exeter School, and he also has an MBA.

One of his first jobs was at Wells, the health care company, in 1986.

In 1988 he joined Pepsi Cola and spent the next eight years working abroad for the fizzy drinks company, including stints in Cyprus and Vienna.

Part of the reason for his joining Butlin's, I hear, is that he wanted to come home. Hi de Hi.

Hearing that Michael Hardern, the zany freelance butler and building society carpetbagger-in-chief, had been expelled by the Coventry Building Society before he could "make any trouble there", I phoned him up to hear his reaction.

I got a recorded message, addressed, no doubt, to the many people interested in obtaining his "Carpetbagger's Guide" on how to pressurise building societies into converting to bank status.

Mr Hardern's message says: "This is the close season for building societies until Michaelmas—29 September. If, however, you can't resist helping, please consult carpetbagger.com [on the Internet] or send us a self-addressed envelope."

"We will send you information when hostilities re-commence in October."

John Willcock

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark	Spot	1 month	3 months
US	1613	24.21	63.63	1000	32	—	—
Canada	2240	7.66	20.22	135.95	69.49	—	—
Germany	2970	97.90	285.27	1804	39.38	—	—
France	3282	340.20	920.50	6073	18.13	—	—
Italy	2250	16.14	45.17	170.21	74.79	—	—
Japan	9150	104.00	307.30	1825	52.51	—	—
Netherlands	6024	71.15	59.41	10854	21.15	—	—
EU	14348	35.31	106.01	10854	21.15	—	—
Belgium	6024	71.15	59.41	10854	21.15	—	—
Denmark	11034	340.20	920.50	6073	18.13	—	—
Norway	3282	106.98	319.30	20336	19.12	—	—
Sweden	1091	14.01	40.17	147.45	6.7	—	—
Switzerland	12063	360.20	980.80	7495	147.42	—	—
Spain	24672	37.36	116.37	6333	5.4	—	—
Australia	12702	30.34	85.93	1789	293.77	—	—
South Africa	2702	39.34	126.16	13492	7.5	—	—
India	4248	8.2	24.41	774.3	5.4	—	—
Malaysia	4248	8.2	24.41	774.3	5.4	—	—
New Zealand	2204	26.36	83.77	15541	7.9	—	—
Saudi Arabia	2204	26.36	83.77	15541	7.9	—	—
Singapore	5432	49.44	53.41	15070	19.6	—	—

Other Spot Rates

Country	Spot	Dollar	Country	Spot	Dollar
Argentina	1612	0.0938	Nigeria	122.304	82.000
Australia	12702	0.0938	Oman	0.0938	0.0938
Brazil	17594	1.0919	Pakistan	63.227	40.075
China	13350	8.2952	Philippines	48.128	29.900
France	3282	0.0938	Portugal	255.564	163.500
Germany	2970	0.0938	Russia	93.043	58.900
Greece	4531	0.0938	South Africa	26.700	26.700
India	4248	0.0938	UAE	46.770	33.734
Kuwait	0.492	0.048			

Forward rates quoted high to low are at a discount; subtract from spot rate. Rates quoted low to high are at a premium; add to spot rate. *Dollar rates quoted as reciprocals. For the latest foreign exchange rates call 0891 123 3033. Calls cost 50p per minute.

Interest Rates

UK	700%	Germany	250%	US	8.50%	Japan	0.50%
Base	Discount	Discount	4.50%	Prime	Discount	Discount	2.50%
France	330%	Canada	4.50%	10-day Repo	5.25%	Switzerland	Discount
Italy	Discount	Denmark	4.75%	3-month	5.00%	Netherlands	Discount
Netherlands	300%	Sweden	3.25%	Repo (Ave)	4.0%	Lombard	100%

Bond Yields

Country	5yr	yield %	10yr	yield %	Country	5yr	yield %	10yr	yield %
UK	7.00%	7.04	7.25%	7.09	Netherlands	2.25%	4.98	5.75%	5.66
US	6.50%	6.22	6.25%	6.38	Spain	7.50%	5.82	7.39%	6.81
Australia	5.50%	5.24	5.20%	5.18	Italy	6.25%	6.33	6.75%	6.61
Germany	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	6.00	Belgium	6.25%	6.23	6.25%	6.25
Japan	8.00%	4.89	5.00%	6.17	Sweden	13.0%	5.97	6.50%	6.16
France	4.75%	4.78	5.50%	5.61	ECU DAT	6.00%	5.20	5.50%	5.50

Money Market Rates

Interbank	6m	7m	1m	3m	6m	1yr
UK	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75
US	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75
Germany	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75
France	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75
Italy	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75
Japan	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75
Canada	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75
Sweden	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75
Denmark	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75
Norway	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75
Finland	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75

Tourist Rates

Tourist Rates					
£ Buys		£ Buys		£ Buys	
Australia (Dollars)	2.0550	France (France)	5.5415	New Zealand (Dollars)	2.4075
Austria (Schillings)	19.5500	Germany (Dollars)	2.2550	Norway (Kroner)	11.8525
Belgium (Francs)	35.5000	Greece (Dramas)	447.7500	Portugal (Escudos)	285.9000
Canada (Dollars)	2.1000	Hong Kong (Dollars)	11.5000	Spain (Pesetas)	238.2500
Cyprus (Pounds)	0.5325	Ireland (Pounds)	1.0650	Sweden (Kronor)	12.4575
Denmark (Kroner)	10.5750	Italy (Lira)	278.0000	Switzerland (Francs)	2.3800
Holland (Gulden)	3.1625	Japan (Yen)	182.5000	Turkey (Lira)	25.490.0000
France (Francs)	5.5500	Malta (Lira)	0.6170	United States (Dollars)	1.5500

Liffe Financial Futures

Contract		Settlement price	High/Low for day	Est. Conts traded	Open Interest
Long Gas	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Gas	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Oil	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Oil	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Euro	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Euro	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Gold	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Gold	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Silver	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Silver	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Copper	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Copper	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Aluminum	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Aluminum	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Zinc	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Zinc	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Lead	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Lead	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Tin	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Tin	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Nickel	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Nickel	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Platinum	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Platinum	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Palladium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Palladium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Rhodium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Rhodium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Iridium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Iridium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Osmium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Osmium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Ruthenium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Ruthenium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Selenium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Selenium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Tellurium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Tellurium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Vanadium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Vanadium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Zirconium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Zirconium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Hafnium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Hafnium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Niobium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Niobium	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Molybdenum	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Molybdenum	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Tantalum	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Tantalum	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Long Tungsten	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245
Short Tungsten	(Sep 07)	114.48	114.18-114.68	85599	125245

Fallon ready to travel for title

RACING
GREG WOOD

When asked recently why his firm did not bet on the jockey's championship, the PR man for one leading bookmaker replied that doing so "invariably cost them a packet". Hard though it is to sympathise with a bookie, the wild shifts in betting on the 1997 Flat title in recent days imply that his reluctance was borne of commercial reality rather than cowardice.

The problem for a bookmaker in a tippy-turvy horse race like the one underway between Frankie Dettori and Kieren Fallon, who are level on 125 winners after the latter's double at Brighton

yesterday, is that hardly anyone owns bets at odds-on. Instead, punters weigh in at odds like the 11-4 available with the Toté about Fallon yesterday morning, and then sit back and watch as he shrinks to 7-4 in the course of an afternoon.

With Dettori idle for five days next week, it is more than likely that those who took a price yesterday will be able to back the Italian and guarantee themselves a profit within little more than 10 days.

Those who do not cover their bet can be sure that Fallon will spare no effort in the pursuit of his first title. "I can't afford to take time off like Frankie, I'm not as wealthy as him," Fallon said yesterday after winning a maiden and a handicap at Brighton

Brighton with a combined value of less than £7,500. "The way I look at it, whether it's Brighton or Bath, they are all winners and they all count, sellers and all."

The depth of that commitment may be tested as soon as

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Newport Knight
(Lingfield 4.30)
NB: Keen Waters
(Lingfield 5.00)

next Monday, when Hamilton stages the only Flat racing in Britain, but on the day when Dettori begins his suspension, it is a far bet that Fallon will make the trek to one of the more remote tracks in the country.

"It is too early to begin worrying about the championship," Fallon added. "There is still a lot of the season left, and look what happened to Frankie last year when an injury put him out for a long time. Wait until the last two weeks of the season, but it might be exciting." In truth, of course, it already is.

Fallon's chance of defending the title has not evaporated, but he can at least look forward to the Ayr Gold Cup next month with some optimism after Plaisir D'Amour, a winner for the Irishman at York last week, was installed as 14-1 favourite for the event yesterday.

Owned by Michael Thorb and trained by Neville Callaghan, Plaisir D'Amour is

one of 142 entries, a record for the race, a field which is headed by Coastal Bluff, last year's winner, with a burden of 10st 2lb.

Coastal Bluff, who dead-heated with Ya Malak for the Nunthorpe Stakes at York last week, has an alternative engagement, however, in the Sprint Cup at Haydock on Saturday. That is also the next destination for another of Fallon's runners, Danetime, who was reported yesterday to have recovered from the slight setback which forced him to miss the Nunthorpe. "He seems perfect now," Callaghan said.

There was disappointment yesterday for Mick Fitzgerald in his attempt to equal the



Fallon: drew level

record sequence of winners for a jockey, with 10 in a row. Since his win on Irie Mon at Market Rasen on 8 August, Fitzgerald had partnered eight consecutive winners - for seven different trainers - but he could finish only ninth on General Glow in the opening race at Worcester, his only ride of the afternoon.

Brittle's pledge to investigate

Rugby Union
CHRIS HEWITT

Cliff Brittle, arch bogeyman of England's professional clubs during the civil war that almost brought domestic rugby to its knees last season, yesterday donned the mantle of honest broker in an effort to avoid an outbreak of renewed hostilities.

The much-maligned chairman of the Rugby Football Union's management board promised to investigate allegations that his representatives attempted to persuade leading players to ditch their club contracts in favour of legally binding agreements with the RFU.

Rob Andrew, the former England outside-half and current director of rugby at Newcastle, claimed last week that "underhand" approaches had been made, aimed at "wresting control away from the clubs". Brittle reacted quickly, corresponding with the 24-strong membership of the Allied Dunbar Premiership to reassure them of his good faith. "I take the accusations extremely seriously," he said, before calling on Andrew to produce evidence in support of his claims.

"This needs to be investigated," said Kim Deshayes, the chief executive of English Rugby Partnership, which administers the major club competitions. "If Rob Andrew is right in what he says, it would be an area for considerable concern."

The RFU are preparing to announce a new backer for the national knock-out cup, a competition currently unsupported following Pilkington's withdrawal from the rugby marketplace. Carlsberg-Tetley, the

brewing giants, are the current favourites, having offered in excess of £1.2m annually. Barclay's Bank and another brewing company, Bass, are also among the bidders.

One man in need of a stiff drink yesterday was Greg Smith, who predictably resigned as Australia's national coach in the wake of their 60-point reverse against South Africa in Pretoria last weekend. John O'Neill, managing director of the Australian Rugby Union, said: "The pressure of constant speculation has taken its toll on Greg's family life and his health. He's decided that this cannot continue and I fully support that decision."

Smith guided his team to a "Celtic Slam" in Scotland, Ireland and Wales last autumn but failed to cut any ice in the more demanding Tri-Nations series with New Zealand and the Springboks and the depressing events at Loftus Versfeld finally forced him to fall on his sword. Rod Macqueen, Canberra-based coach of the wildly successful ACT outfit, is an obvious candidate to take over. Other names in the hat include Alec Evans, a former assistant coach of the Wallabies who has just started a second stint at Cardiff, and John Connolly, Macqueen's Super 12 counterpart at Queensland.

England's annual Cook Cup match in Australia next July will be preceded by a demanding five-match trek around New Zealand. The itinerary includes two Tests against the All Blacks, in Dunedin on 20 June and in Auckland seven days later.

ENGLAND ITINERARY: 23 June: New Zealand A; 26 June: New Zealand A; 29 June: New Zealand A; 30 June: New Zealand A; 1 July: New Zealand A; 2 July: New Zealand A; 3 July: New Zealand A; 4 July: New Zealand A; 5 July: New Zealand A; 6 July: New Zealand A; 7 July: New Zealand A; 8 July: New Zealand A; 9 July: New Zealand A; 10 July: New Zealand A; 11 July: New Zealand A; 12 July: New Zealand A; 13 July: New Zealand A; 14 July: New Zealand A; 15 July: New Zealand A; 16 July: New Zealand A; 17 July: New Zealand A; 18 July: New Zealand A; 19 July: New Zealand A; 20 July: New Zealand A; 21 July: New Zealand A; 22 July: New Zealand A; 23 July: New Zealand A; 24 July: New Zealand A; 25 July: New Zealand A; 26 July: New Zealand A; 27 July: New Zealand A; 28 July: New Zealand A; 29 July: New Zealand A; 30 July: New Zealand A; 31 July: New Zealand A; 1 August: New Zealand A; 2 August: New Zealand A; 3 August: New Zealand A; 4 August: New Zealand A; 5 August: New Zealand A; 6 August: New Zealand A; 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A real sporting hero

Ken Jones looks at the rise of Tiger Woods, page 22

sport

Hard Ryder

Decision time approaches for Ballesteros, page 22

Shearer to return in the new year

Football

MARK BURTON

Sir John Hall offered Newcastle supporters an early Christmas present yesterday, but then was forced to disappoint them.

Hall, the Newcastle chairman, said on BBC Radio 4 in the morning that he understood that Alan Shearer, who suffered an ankle ligament injury in a pre-season match at Goodison Park, could be back in competitive football "November-ish".

Those Magpie fans who were whooping with joy would have missed his qualifying comment that he would have a clearer idea once he had spoken to the club doctor, who, like Hall, was in Croatia for last night's Champions' League qualifier. The doctor did not have such good news. Hall later explained: "I've now had a chance to speak with the doctor who has informed me that it is far too early to give any indication as to when Alan Shearer will be back. The specialist has told the club everything is going well and we are delighted with the progress he's making."

The player and his medical advisors are happy with his rate of recovery, but there is no target date for the England captain's return to the Premiership front line. Late January seems to be the most likely time.

Another international striker, Fabrizio Ravanelli, could still be in the North-east when Shearer is fit to play. He will not be leaving Middlesbrough to join Everton unless the Merseysiders come up with the £7.5m Boro are insisting is their minimum fee for the Italian.

On a day for abandoning hopes, Wales reluctantly turned down the chance of playing against the Brazil. They might have to make do with helping England to prepare for the World Cup finals, given that Glenn Hoddie's side qualifies.

The Welsh, who have failed to qualify, were contacted by Brazil last week and offered a game in Salvador, north of São Paulo, on 9 or 10 September, but there would have been problems in bringing the players back in time for Premiership matches the following weekend. There was also a good chance that

Brazil would play Wales in a return prior to going to France to defend their world title next summer. That was pencilled in for early June, but because of Brazil's cash demands, that, too, has been abandoned.

Money stands between Peter Nowak and a contract at Tottenham. Transfer talks broke down when the Pole's German club, 1860 Munich, demanded £1.25m, twice what Spurs were prepared to pay.

The Sheffield Wednesday striker Andy Booth has had a cartilage operation and will be ruled out for around a month to add to the club's early-season problems.

With Wednesday having earned only one point from their first four games and about to lose their Italian import Benito Carbone to a three-month ban, their manager, David Pleat, admitted: "Losing Booth is a big blow."

The £2.65m former Huddersfield forward damaged a knee in the 1-1 draw with Wimbledon last Saturday. Although he was passed fit for the 7-2 defeat at Blackburn, he had to go off during the first half. Carbone will be able to play in Saturday's home game against Leicester but is set to miss matches next month against Liverpool and Coventry plus a Coca-Cola Cup tie after being sent off at Ewood Park.

The League of Wales club Cwmbran Town have been forced to accept a five-figure loan from undisclosed sources to enable them to fulfil their European Cup-Winners' Cup preliminary round second leg match against National Bucuresti in Romania tonight.

Cwmbran, beaten 5-2 in the first leg on their own ground two weeks ago, took less than £3,000 on the gate and now face the prospect of paying around £15,000 in travel and accommodation expenses for the return.

The Gwent club had been hoping to boost their revenue through television rights and the subsequent increase in sponsorship and advertising, but those hopes ended when BBC Wales decided not to screen the match. Although they will receive £20,000 from Uefa for taking part in the competition, Cwmbran must wait until next summer for that money.



White charger: Hugo Simon, of Austria, puts in some practice on Apricot D in preparation for the European Show Jumping Championships, accustomed himself to the arena in Mannheim, Germany, where competition begins today. Report, page 21; photograph, Reuter

Eager Heath upsets Parke

Squash

England's Simon Parke lost to Scotland's Martin Heath in the biggest upset of the Cathay Pacific Hong Kong Open so far. Heath, last week's Singapore Open champion and ranked 20th in the world, won 15-3, 15-7, 15-9 to knock out the fifth seeded Englishman in the first round.

Meanwhile, the world No 1 Jansher Khan has said he wants to win every title in the world at least 10 times before he retires. Jansher, 28, defeated Greece's Paul Gregory 15-2, 15-12, 15-9 in the first round of the Hong Kong Open and is determined to make up for last year's defeat in the final, where he lost to Australia's Rodney Eyles.

The Pakistani said the Hong Kong event, which he has won seven times, was part of his plan to try and win as many titles as possible and set records that would be almost impossible for future generations to better.

Jansher already has six British Open titles to his name and has won the World Open a record eight times. Jansher faces England's Nicholas Taylor in the second round today.

The defending champion Eyles had to work hard to overcome Canada's Graham Ryding 15-17, 15-6, 8-15, 15-11, 15-9 in the first round. England's Peter Marshall, the former world No 2 who is making a comeback after a lengthy absence, advanced to a second-round clash with Eyles after beating another Australian, Anthony Hill, 15-4, 15-6, 15-3. Chris Walker, from Essex, the seventh seeded England No 1, went down 15-8, 15-6, 9-15, 15-13 to a fellow left-hander, Paul Johnson of Kent.

Nottingham's Peter Marshall progressed with a win over Australia's Anthony Hill, while Stephen Meads of Berkshire removed the French champion, Julien Bonet, in straight games.

Johnson thought his win over Walker, who had confessed to an unaccountable nervousness in such an experienced player, was his best PSA World Tour performance.

Taylor's match against Jansher came courtesy of a 15-11, 13-15, 10-15, 15-8, 15-13 win over the Irish champion Derek Ryan, with whom he trains in Manchester.

Today Mark Chaloner of Lincolnshire and Del Harris of Essex play each other, while Alex Gough of Wales plays Canada's Jonathon Power and the British champion, Mark Cairns of Oxford, meets Scotland's world No 2, Peter Nicol.

Hill linked with move to Prost - at a price

Motor racing

Damon Hill is being linked with the team headed by the former world champion, Alain Prost, as his Formula One future reaches make-or-break time.

Prost, a former Williams team-mate of Hill, is ready to sign the current drivers' championship if the price is right.

"I want the best driver possible on condition that he is not too expensive. I have my budget and I am sticking to it," the Frenchman said yesterday.

The pair are expected to hold talks this week, with Hill's asking price likely to be the crucial factor.

After the Belgian Grand Prix at Spa-Francorchamps last weekend, Hill revealed that he had turned down an offer of

£13m over two years from Sauber-Petronas and a £1.3m basic wage package and £650,000 win bonus from McLaren-Mercedes.

The Arrows driver has also been linked with Jordan, but Eddie Jordan, the team owner, said yesterday that their accent on youth meant they would be keeping Giancarlo Fisichella and Ralf Schumacher next season.

Jordan is confident he can win his contract battle with Benetton over Fisichella, who underlined his potential with second place to Michael Schumacher on Sunday.

Prost was impressed with Hill's ability when they were team-mates at Williams in 1993, the year the Frenchman retired after winning the championship for the fourth time.

Despite agreeing an engine supply deal with Peugeot starting next season and signing Olivier Panis for two more years, Prost said recently that his would not be an all-French team.

An Anglo-French driving alliance of Hill and Panis, currently recuperating after breaking both his legs in Canada in June, would be an attractive proposition.

Hill could yet remain with Arrows, while Sauber are also willing to reopen negotiations, although they no longer see him as a priority to partner Johnny Herbert.

Benetton remain a potential haven, especially if they lose out on Fisichella, although whether they can offer Hill a competitive package on and off the track is doubtful.

Barnett's victory over county

Cricket

Derbyshire's former captain, Kim Barnett, yesterday claimed a victory for "cricketers everywhere" after winning his two-month dispute with the county. He was ready to take Derbyshire to an appeal hearing at Lord's after they fined him £1,500 for making media statements made in the wake of Dean Jones' walk-out in June.

Derbyshire had banned their players from commenting on the former Australian Test player's resignation but in a statement issued today, the club accepted that "it was inappropriate for officers of the committee to impose a ban on players speaking

to the media in such circumstances. Players and committee agreed that players can make public statements as long as they observe the new guidelines from the England and Wales Cricket Board. The committee therefore agreed that Kim Barnett has never been in breach of his contract with the club."

Barnett said: "This has established an important principle for cricketers, not just here, but everywhere."

Derbyshire also faced up to the prospect of losing their talented batsman Chris Adams, who has repeatedly asked over the last four years for his release. The chairman, Vic Brown, said he had held "20 hours of talks" with Adams, his family

and agent to try to get him to make a commitment to Derbyshire, but he was forced to admit: "I think it's unlikely he will stay."

Northamptonshire have held a further meeting with Shane Warne in their bid to persuade the Australian leg-spinner to join the county. The club's chief executive, Steve Coverdale, and the chairman, Lynn Wilson, met Warne and his adviser, Austin Robertson. Northamptonshire have denied speculation that they offered Warne the captaincy, but are believed to be competing for the Australian's services along with Nottinghamshire, Lancashire and Sussex.

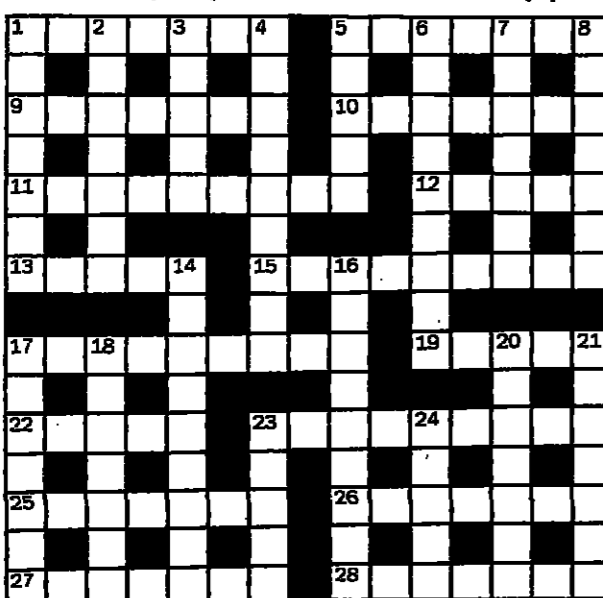
County cricket, page 22

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3389, Thursday 28 August

By Spurious

Wednesday's solution



1. LAVENDER
2. VINE
3. I WOULD
4. MYSELF
5. PROVOKE
6. EYE
7. GORY
8. FLUTING
9. CLIMES
10. O F E O N
11. SPOKESPERSON
12. E I V T A S
13. CORPUS
14. REALITY
15. A V R B
16. BARNEY
17. ECSTATIC
18. S T I R A R D
19. SHADOWS
20. ULSTER
21. A R N E C O N
22. SUIT
23. ETERNITY

ACROSS

- 1 It provides us with rain-bows, for instance (7)
- 5 Fictitious quadrille dancer, maiden replacing large hood (7)
- 9 Heating's supplied by coal product most of wealthy used (7)
- 10 Sweet yet elegant English commander enters (7)
- 11 Dish made by girl, linked with the south-west, perhaps? (5, 4)
- 12 Charge small vermilion to young socialite (5)
- 13 Sensitive area in cheek (5)
- 15 Automated equipment enabling army equipment to cross crest of ridge (9)
- 17 Rival action's conducted at very high speed (9)
- 19 Page one, in the main, appears in colour (5)
- 22 Compere over in Europe, formerly Middle East (5)
- 23 Holding large volume, auditor gets sanctimonious about account (9)
- 25 Right about new Deputy Lieutenant having to move laboriously (7)
- 26 Flat fare available throughout Scotland (7)
- 27 Go into a lecture, primarily about the intestinal system (7)
- 28 Mislaid key - sorry not to finish deliveries (7)

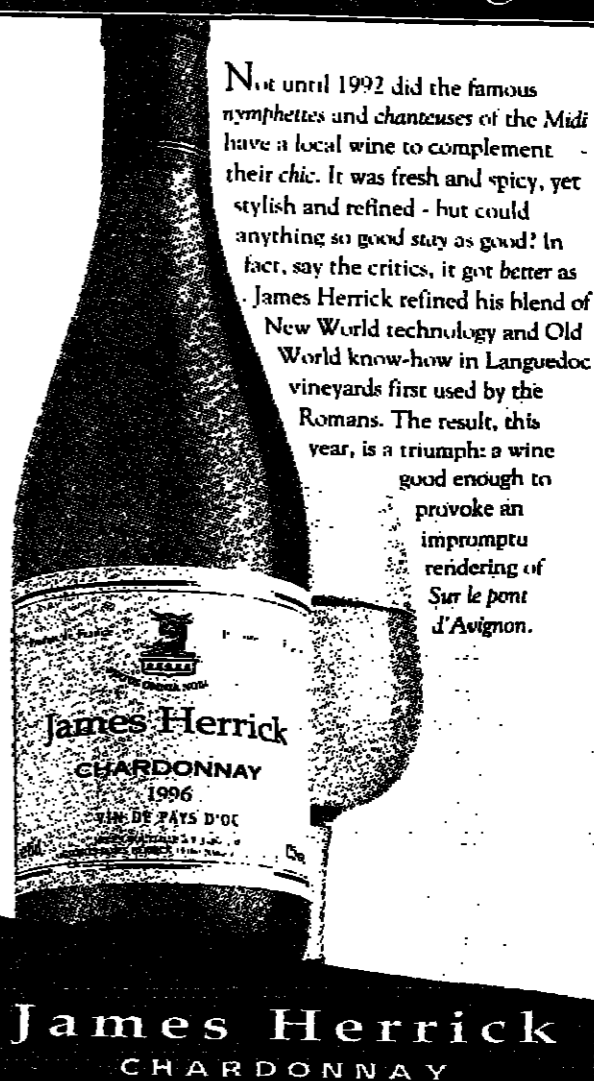
DOWN

- 1 Rebellious group in France starting a battle (7)
- 2 Sister taking care of veteran fighter (7)
- 3 Electrical connection in cubby hole? (5)
- 4 Sporting type in grueling match, say, ultimately beaten (9)
- 5 Scotsman going with a Welsh bird, exotic one (5)
- 6 Uses powered mechanism to remove water from locks (4-5)
- 7 See him wearing special belt as protection from minor injuries (7)
- 8 Manoeuvre for which it's necessary to leave space (2-5)
- 9 Bowman, maybe? (4-5)
- 10 Dreadfully dim around US city involves a policeman coming to house (9)
- 11 Word of reassurance about alternative technology in part of hospital (7)
- 12 What may be current, having a number? (7)
- 13 Professional cricketer expecting initially to get certification of will (7)
- 14 Solutions producing rawness if misused (7)
- 15 Church member turns up with fish basket (5)
- 16 Provide food that's consumed, when in credit (5)

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At last the South of France has the wine to match its women and song.

Not until 1992 did the famous nymphs and chanteuses of the Midi have a local wine to complement their chic. It was fresh and spicy, yet stylish and refined - but could anything so good stay as good? In fact, say the critics, it got better as James Herrick refined his blend of New World technology and Old World know-how in Languedoc vineyards first used by the Romans. The result, this year, is a triumph: a wine good enough to provoke an impromptu rendering of *Sur le pont d'Avignon*.



James Herrick CHARDONNAY

سكرا من الامين